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PARADISE LOST. *Front.*

The mind through all her powers
Irradiate, there plant eyes, all mist from thence
Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight.

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

JOHN MILTON.

A New Edition, carefully Revised,

FROM THE TEXT OF THOMAS NEWTON, D.D.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED

A BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY WILLIAM HARVEY.

NEW EDITION.

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PREFACE.

In preparing the present edition of Milton's poetical works, I have laboured under the somewhat difficult task of trying to give a good deal of matter in a very small space. A writer like Milton, whose whole style is fraught with allusion, and who, like Propertius, is perpetually aiming at making erudition subservient to poetry, draws largely, not only on the present feelings, but likewise on the memory of his readers. And yet, so noble are Milton's *imitations*—so frequently does he surpass the model—so perfect is the mould, so exquisite the chisel with which he recasts the idea of an earlier brother in the art, that it is ever a pleasing study to compare passage with passage, word with word, and to marvel at the process which has refined many a crudity, softened and Christianized many a thought, which wanted Christianity only to give it greatness.

The able annotations collected or written by Bishop Newton, have done so much towards showing *what* Milton imitated, and *how* he could imitate, that I cannot lay credit for much originality in the notes now submitted to the reader. If I have any regret, it is, that there is an unfortunate law of dimensions which prevents the possibility of compressing the contents of four rather substantial octavos into a volume of the size and price which, in these book-buying days, is almost inseperable from popular success. But I hope that what is given will be found plain and useful, and that few readers will go away unsatisfied, as far understanding the *meaning* of the poet is concerned.

As to the text, I have almost invariably avoided the discussion of various readings, partly from want of space, partly because I had no wish to give a practical lesson on the uncertainty of criticism. No man who has ever written a "copy of verses" (whether in canine Latin, bad English, or otherwise) can be ignorant how easy it is to substitute one word for another, or to correct for the better or the worse. A few rather obvious corrections have therefore formed the limit of my efforts, as far as criticism is concerned.

It is a vain task to try to praise Milton, after so many better critics have exhausted the theme; but I may, perhaps, be permitted to say a few words respecting the value of his writings as a lesson in English, the language probably most neglected by Englishmen, and most cared for by Milton. Milton drew on the classical and Continental languages with unsparing freedom. He culled accuracy from one language, brilliancy from another, and quaintness from the archaisms of a third. His style was thoroughly *educated;* he used words not according to convention, but with a strict reference to their derivation and primitive meaning; and if he sometimes sacrificed power to refinement, he never suffered himself to write vulgarly in order to be thought to write down to the popular "style of the day."

Milton's eccentricities of language are often nothing more or less than struggles after correctness. Even in the spelling of words, he has a scholastic reason for the variations he takes from popular practice. His writing are a fine and a speaking lesson to those who imagine that poetry may set grammar at defiance, and that wanton transgression of everything like sober writing is a first-rate, if not a sufficient credential to the court of the Muses.

THEODORE ALOIS BUCKLEY.

London, 1853

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THE LIFE OF MILTON,

ABRIDGED FROM

BISHOP NEWTON.

JOHN MILTON, the grandfather of our poet, was, according to Wood, an under-ranger or keeper of the forest of Shotover, near Halton, in Oxfordshire; he was of the Romish religion, and such a bigot, that he disinherited his son only for being a Protestant. Upon this the son, the poet's father, named likewise John Milton, settled in London, and became a scrivener by the advice of a friend eminent in that profession: but he was not so devoted to gain and to business as to lose all taste for the more polite arts, and was particularly skilled in music, in which he was not only a fine performer, but is also celebrated as the composer of several pieces: and yet, on the other hand, he was not so fond of his music and amusements, as in the least to neglect his business, but by his diligence and economy acquired a competent estate, which enabled him afterwards to retire, and live in the country. He was by all accounts a very worthy man, and married an excellent woman, Sarah, of the ancient family of the Bradshaws, according to Wood; but Mr. Philips, the nephew of our author, and therefore more likely to know, says, of the family of the Castons, derived originally from Wales. Whoever she was, she is said to have been a woman of incomparable virtue and goodness, and by her her husband had two sons and a daughter.

The elder of the sons was our famous poet, who was born in the year of our Lord 1608, on the 9th of December, in the morning, between six and seven o'clock, in Bread

Street, London, where his father lived, at the sign of the Spread Eagle, which was also the coat of arms of the family. He was named John, as his father and grandfather had been before him; and from the beginning discovering the marks of an uncommon genius, he was designed for a scholar, and enjoyed the advantages of a good education, partly under private tutors, and partly at a public school. It appears from the fourth of his Latin elegies, and from the first and fourth of his familiar epistles, that Mr. Thomas Young, who was afterwards pastor to the company of English merchants residing at Hamburg, was one of his private preceptors: and when he had made good progress in his studies at home, he was sent to St. Paul's School, to be prepared for the university, under the care of Mr. Gill, who was the master at that time, and to whose son are addressed some of his familiar Latin epistles. In this early time of his life, such was his love of learning, and so great his ambition to surpass his equals, that from his twelfth year he commonly continued his studies till midnight, which (as he says himself, in his Second Defence) was the first ruin of his eyes, to whose natural debility were added too frequent headaches: but nothing could abate his zeal for letters. It is very seldom seen, that such application and such a genius meet in the same person. The force of either is great, but both combined must perform wonders.

He was now in the seventeenth year of his age, and was a very good classical scholar, and master of several languages, when he was sent to the university of Cambridge, and admitted at Christ's College, on the 12th of February 1624-5, under the tuition of Mr. William Chappel, afterwards Bishop of Ross, in Ireland. He continued above seven years at the university, and took his degrees of Bachelor of Arts in 1628-9, and of Master, in 1632.

He was designed by his parents for holy orders; and among the manuscripts of Trinity College, Cambridge, there are two draughts in Milton's own hand of a letter to a friend, who had importuned him to take orders, when he had attained the age of twenty-three: but he had conceived some early prejudices against the doctrine and discipline of the Church; and subscribing to the Articles was, in his opinion, subscribing to slavery. This, no doubt, was a disappointment to his friends, who, though in comfortable, were yet by no means in great circumstances: nor

does he seem to have had any inclination for any other profession; he had too free a spirit to be limited and confined; and was for comprehending all sciences, but professing none. And, therefore, after he had left the university in 1632, he retired to his father's house in the country; for his father had by this time quitted business, and lived at an estate which he had purchased at Horton, near Colebrooke, in Buckinghamshire. Here he resided with his parents for the space of five years, and, as he himself has informed us, read over all the Greek and Latin authors, particularly the historians; but now and then he made an excursion to London, sometimes to buy books or to meet his friends from Cambridge, and at other times to learn something new in the mathematics or music, with which he was extremely delighted.

His retirement, therefore, was a learned retirement, and it was not long before the world reaped the fruits of it. It was in the year 1634 that his Mask of "Comus," was presented at Ludlow Castle. There was formerly a president of Wales, and a sort of court kept at Ludlow, which has since been abolished; and the president at that time was the Earl of Bridgwater, before whom Milton's Mask was presented on Michaelmas night, and the principal parts, those of the two brothers, were performed by his lordship's sons, the Lord Brackly and Mr. Thomas Egerton, and that of the lady, by his lordship's daughter, the Lady Alice Egerton. The occasion of this poem seems to have been merely an accident of the two brothers and the lady having lost one another in their way to the castle: and it is written very much in imitation of Shakspeare's "Tempest," and the "Faithful Shepherdess" of Beaumont and Fletcher; and though one of the first, is yet one of the most beautiful of Milton's compositions. It was for some time handed about only in manuscript; but afterwards, to satisfy the importunity of friends, and to save the trouble of transcribing, it was printed at London, though without the author's name, in 1637, with a dedication to the Lord Brackly, by Mr. H. Lawes, who composed the music, and played the part of the attendant Spirit.[1]

In 1637 he wrote another excellent piece, his Lycidas, wherein he laments the untimely fate of a friend,[2] who was

[1] Many of our readers will recollect its magnificent revival, under Mr. Macready's management of Drury Lane Theatre.

[2] See the introduction prefixed to this poem.

unfortunately drowned that same year in the month of August, on the Irish seas, in his passage from Chester. Despite the subject, however, this poem is not all made up of sorrow and tenderness; there is a mixture of satire and indignation; for in part of it the poet takes occasion to inveigh against the corruptions of the clergy, and seems to have first discovered his acrimony against Archbishop Laud, and to have threatened him with the loss of his head, which afterwards happened to him through the fury of his enemies. At least I can think of no sense so proper to be given to the following verses in Lycidas—

> "Besides, what the grim wolf with privy paw
> Daily devours apace, and nothing said;
> But that two-handed engine at the door
> Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more."

About this time, as we learn from one of his familiar epistles, he had some thoughts of taking chambers at one of the inns of court, for he was not very well pleased with living so obscurely in the country: but his mother dying, he prevailed upon his father to let him indulge a desire, which he had long entertained, of seeing foreign countries, and particularly Italy; and having communicated his design to Sir Henry Wotton, who had formerly been Ambassador at Venice, and was then Provost of Eton College, and having also sent him his "Mask," of which he had not yet publicly acknowledged himself the author, he received from him a most friendly and complimentary letter, dated from the College the 10th of April, 1638.

He now set out on his travels, attended by only one servant, who accompanied him through all his travels; and he went first to France, where he had recommendations to Lord Scudamore, the English Ambassador there at that time; and as soon as he came to Paris, he waited upon his Lordship, and was received with wonderful civility; and having an earnest desire to visit the learned Hugo Grotius, he was, by his Lordship's means, introduced to that great man, who was then Ambassador at the French court from the famous Christina, Queen of Sweden; and the visit was to their mutual satisfaction; each of them being pleased to see a person, of whom he had heard such commendations. But at Paris he stayed not long, his thoughts and his wishes hastened into Italy; and so after a few days he took leave of the Lord Scudamore, who

very kindly gave him letters to the English merchants in the several places through which he was to travel, requesting them to do him all the good offices which lay in their power.

From Paris he went directly to Nice, where he took shipping for Genoa, from whence he went to Leghorn, and thence to Pisa, and so to Florence, in which city he found sufficient inducements to make a stay of two months. For besides the curiosities and other beauties of the place, he took great delight in the company and conversation there, and frequented their academies, as they are called, the meetings of the most polite and ingenious persons, which they have in this, as well as in the other principal cities of Italy, for the exercise and improvement of wit and learning among them. And in these conversations he bore so good a part, and produced so many exceilent compositions, that he was soon taken notice of, and was very much courted and caressed by several of the nobility and prime wits of Florence. Giacomo Gaddi, Antonio Francini, Carlo Dati, Beneditto Bonmatthei, Cultellino, Frescobaldi, Clementilli, are reckoned among his particular friends. At Gaddi's house the academies were held, which he constantly frequented. Antonio Francini composed an Italian ode in his commendation. Carlo Dati wrote a Latin eulogium of him, and corresponded with him after his return to England. Bonmatthei was at that time about publishing an Italian grammar; and the eighth of our author's familiar epistles, dated at Florence, September 10, 1638, is addressed to him upon that occasion, commending his design, and advising him to add some observations concerning the true pronunciation of that language for the use of foreigners.

So much good acquaintance would probably have detained him longer at Florence, if he had not been going to Rome, which, to a curious traveller, is certainly the place the most worth seeing of any in the world. And so he took leave of his friends at Florence, and went from thence to Sienna, and from Sienna to Rome, where he stayed much about the same time that he had continued at Florence, feasting both his eyes and his mind, and delighted with the fine paintings, and sculptures, and other rarities and antiquities of the city, as well as with the conversation of several learned and ingenious men, and particularly of Lucas Holstenius, keeper of the Vatican library, who re-

ceived him with the greatest courtesy, and showed him all the Greek authors, whether in print or in manuscript, which had passed through his correction; and also presented him to Cardinal Barberini, who, at an entertainment of music, performed at his own expense, waited for him at the door, and taking him by the hand brought him into the assembly.

From Rome he went to Naples, in company with a certain hermit, and by his means was introduced to the acquaintance of Giovanni Battista Manso, Marquis of Villa, a Neapolitan nobleman, of singular merit and virtue, to whom Tasso addresses his dialogue of friendship, and whom he likewise mentions in his "Gierusalemme Liberata" with great honour. This nobleman was particularly civil to Milton, frequently visited him at his lodgings, and went with him to show him the viceroy's palace, and whatever was curious or worth notice in the city: and, moreover, he honoured him so far as to make a Latin distich in his praise, which is printed before our author's Latin poems, with several other eulogies of a similar character. As a testimony of his gratitude, Milton presented to the marquis, at his departure from Naples, his eclogue, entitled "Mansus," which is well worth reading among his Latin poems,

Having seen the finest parts of Italy, Milton was now thinking of passing over into Sicily and Greece, when he was diverted from his purpose by the news from England, that things were tending to a civil war between the King and Parliament: for he thought it unworthy of himself to be taking his pleasure abroad, while his countrymen were contending for liberty at home. He resolved, therefore, to return by the way of Rome, though he was advised to the contrary by the merchants, who had received intelligence from their correspondents, that the English Jesuits there were forming plots against him, in case he should return thither, by reason of the great freedom which he had used in all his discourses of religion. For he had by no means observed the rule, recommended to him by Sir Henry Wotton, of keeping his thoughts close and his countenance open. He had visited Galileo, a prisoner to the Inquisition for asserting the motion of the earth, and thinking otherwise in astronomy than the Dominicans and Franciscans thought. And though the Marquis of Villa had shown him such distinguishing marks of favour at Naples, yet he told him

at his departure that he would have shown him much greater, if he had been more reserved in matters of religion. But he had a soul above dissimulation and disguise: he was neither afraid nor ashamed to vindicate the truth; and if any man had, he had in him the spirit of an old martyr. He was so prudent, indeed, that he would not, of his own accord, begin any discourse of religion; but, at the same time, he was so honest, that if he was questioned at all about his faith, he would not dissemble his sentiments, whatever was the consequence. And, with this resolution, he went to Rome the second time, and stayed there two months more, neither concealing his name, nor declining openly to defend the truth, if any thought proper to attack him. And yet, God's good providence protecting him, he came safe to his kind friends at Florence, where he was received with as much joy and affection as if he had returned into his own country.

Here, likewise, he stayed two months, as he had done before, excepting only an excursion of a few days to Lucca; and then crossing the Apennines, and passing through Bologna and Ferrara, he came to Venice, in which city he spent a month; and having shipped off the books, which he had collected in his travels, and particularly a chest or two of choice music books of the best masters flourishing about that time in Italy, he took his course through Verona, Milan, and along the lake Leman to Geneva. In this city he tarried some time, meeting here with people of his own principles, and contracted an intimate friendship with Giovanni Deodati, a most learned professor of divinity, whose annotations upon the Bible are published in English. And from thence returning through France, the same way that he had gone before, he arrived safe in England, after a peregrination of one year and about three months, having seen more, and learned more, and conversed with more famous men, and made more real improvements, than most others in double the time.

His first business after his return was to pay his duty to his father, and to visit his other friends; but this pleasure was much diminished by the loss of his dear friend and schoolfellow, Charles Deodati, in his absence. While he was abroad, he heard it reported that he was dead; and upon his coming home he found it but too true, and lamented his death in an excellent Latin eclogue entitled "Epitaphium Damonis." This Deodati had a father origi

nally of Lucca, but his mother was English, and he was born and bred in England, and studied physic, and was an admirable scholar, and no less remarkable for his sobriety and other virtues, than for his great learning and ingenuity.

Soon after his return, he had taken a lodging at one Russel's, a tailor, in St. Bride's Churchyard; but he continued not long there, having not sufficient room for his library and furniture, and therefore determined to take a house, and accordingly took a handsome garden-house in Aldersgate-street, situated at the end of an entry, which was the more agreeable to a studious man for its privacy and freedom from noise and disturbance.[1] And in this house he continued several years, and his sister's two sons were put to board with him—first the younger, and afterwards the elder; and some other of his intimate friends requested of him the same favour for their sons, especially since there was little more trouble in instructing half a dozen than two or three: and he, who could not easily deny anything to his friends, and who knew that the greatest men in all ages had delighted in teaching others the principles of knowledge and virtue, undertook the office, not out of any sordid and mercenary views, but merely from a benevolent disposition, and a desire to do good. And his method of education was as much above the pedantry and jargon of the common schools, as his genius was superior to that of a common schoolmaster, and the course of reading extensive as compared with the ordinary range adopted in schools. The Sunday's exercise for his pupils was for the most part to read a chapter of the Greek Testament, and to hear his learned exposition of it. The next work after this was to write from his dictation some part of a system of divinity, which he had collected from the ablest authors, who had written upon that subject. Such were his academic institutions; and thus, by teaching others, he in some measure enlarged his own knowledge; and, having the reading of so many authors as it were by proxy, he might possibly have preserved his sight if he had not moreover been perpetually busied in reading or writing something himself. It was certainly a very recluse and studious life that both he and his pupils led; but the young men of that age were of a different turn from those of the present; and he himself gave an example to those

[1] A strange contrast to the Aldersgate-street of our day!

under him of hard study and spare diet; only now and then, once in three weeks or a month, he made a gaudy day with some young gentlemen of his acquaintance, the chief of whom, says Mr. Philips, were Mr. Alphry and Mr. Miller, both of Gray's-inn, and two of the greatest beaux of those times.

But he was not so fond of this academical life as to be an indifferent spectator of what was acted upon the public stage of the world. The nation was now in a great ferment in 1641, and the clamour ran high against the bishops, when he joined loudly in the cry, to help the Puritan ministers (as he says himself in his second "Defence"), they being inferior to the bishops in learning and eloquence; and published his two books, "Of Reformation in England," written to a friend. About the same time, certain ministers having published a treatise against episcopacy, in answer to the "Humble Remonstrance of Dr. Joseph Hall, Bishop of Norwich," under the title of "Smectymnuus," a word consisting of the initial letters of their names, Stephen Marshal, Edmund Calamy, Thomas Young, Matthew Newcomen, and William Spurstow; and Archbishop Usher having published at Oxford a refutation of "Smectymnuus," in a tract concerning the "Original of Bishops and Metropolitans," Milton wrote his little piece "Of Prelatical Episcopacy," in opposition chiefly to Usher, for he was for contending with the most powerful adversary: there would be either less disgrace in the defeat, or more glory in the victory. He handled the subject more at large in his next performance, which was the "Reason of Church Government urged against Prelaty," in two books. And Bishop Hall having published a "Defence of the Humble Remonstrance," he wrote "Animadversions" upon it. All these treatises he published within the course of one year (1641), which show how very diligent he was in the cause that he had undertaken. And the next year he set forth his "Apology for Smectymnuus," in answer to the "Confutation of his Animadversions," written, as he thought himself, by Bishop Hall or his son. And here very luckily ended a controversy, which detained him from greater and better writings which he was meditating, more useful to the public, as well as more suitable to his own genius and inclination; but he thought all this while that he was vindicating ecclesiastical liberty.

In the year 1643, and the 35th of his age, he married

Mary, the eldest daughter of Mr. Richard Powell, of Forest-hill, near Shotover, in Oxfordshire, a justice of the peace, and a gentleman of good repute and figure in that country. But she had not lived with her husband above a month, before she was earnestly solicited by her relations to come and spend the remaining part of the summer with them in the country. If it was not at her instigation that her friends made this request, yet at least it was agreeable to her inclination; and she obtained her husband's consent upon a promise of returning at Michaelmas. And in the meanwhile his studies went on vigorously; and his chief diversion, after the business of the day, was now and then in an evening to visit the Lady Margaret Lee, daughter of the Earl of Marlborough, Lord High Treasurer of England, and President of the Privy Council to King James I. This lady, being a woman of excellent wit and understanding, had a particular honour for our author, and took great delight in his conversation; as likewise did her husband, Captain Hobson, a very accomplished gentleman. And what a regard Milton again had for her, he has left upon record in a sonnet to her praise, extant among his other poems.

Michaelmas was now come, but he heard nothing of his wife's return. He wrote to her, but received no answer. He wrote again letter after letter, but received no answer to any of them. He then despatched a messenger with a letter, desiring her to return; but she positively refused, and dismissed the messenger with contempt. Whether it was, that she had conceived any dislike to her husband's person or humour; or whether she could not conform to his retired and philosophical manner of life, having been accustomed to a house of much gaiety and company; or whether, being of a family strongly attached to the royal cause, she could not bear her husband's republican principles; or whether she was over-persuaded by her relations, who possibly might repent of having matched the eldest daughter of the family to a man so distinguished for taking the contrary part, the King's head-quarters being in their neighbourhood at Oxford, and his Majesty having now some fairer prospect of success;—whether any or all of these were the reasons of this extraordinary behaviour, however it was, it so highly incensed her husband, that he thought it would be dishonourable ever to receive her again after such a repulse, and he determined to repudiate her as she had in

effect repudiated him, and to consider her no longer as his wife. And to fortify this his resolution, and at the same time to justify it to the world, he wrote the "Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce," wherein he endeavours to prove that indisposition, unfitness, or contrariety of mind, proceeding from any unchangeable cause in nature, hindering and ever likely to hinder the main benefits of conjugal society, which are solace and peace, are greater reasons of divorce than adultery or natural frigidity, especially if there be no children, and there be mutual consent for separation. He published it at first without his name, but the style easily betrayed the author; and afterwards, as it was objected that his doctrine was a novel notion, and a paradox that nobody had ever asserted before, he endeavoured to confirm his own opinion by the authority of others, and published, in 1644, the "Judgment of Martin Bucer," &c.; and, as it was still objected that his doctrine could not be reconciled to Scripture, he published, in 1645, his "Tetrachordon," or expositions upon the four chief places in Scripture, which treat of marriage, or nullities in marriage. At the first appearing of the "Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce," the clergy raised a heavy outcry against it. Milton was attacked both from press and pulpit — provocations which doubtless contributed not a little to make him such an enemy to the Presbyterians, to whom he before had been a distinguished friend. He composed likewise two of his sonnets on the reception his book of "Divorce" met with, but the latter is much the better of the two.

But while he was engaged in this controversy of divorce, he was not so totally engaged in it but he attended to other things, and about this time published his letter of "Education" to Mr. Samuel Hartlib; and in 1644 he published his "Areopagitica," or speech for the liberty of unlicensed printing to the Parliament of England. It was written at the desire of several learned men, and is perhaps the best vindication that has been published, at any time or in any language, of that liberty which is the basis and support of all other liberties—the liberty of the Press; but alas! it had not the desired effect; for the Presbyterians were as fond of exercising the licensing power when they get it into their own hands, as they had been clamorous before in inveighing against it while it was in the hands of the prelates. In 1645 was published a collection of his poems, Latin and English, the principal of which are "On the Morning of

Christ's Nativity," "L'Allegro," "Il Penseroso," "Lycidas," the "Mask," &c., &c.; and if he had left no other monuments of his poetical genius behind him, these would have been sufficient to have rendered his name immortal.

But his "Doctrine of Divorce" and the maintenance of it principally engaged his thoughts at this period; and whether others were persuaded or not by his arguments, he was certainly convinced himself that he was in the right; and as a proof of it he determined to marry again, and made his addresses to a young lady of great wit and beauty, one of the daughters of Dr. Davis. But intelligence of this coming to his wife, and the then declining state of the king's cause, and consequently of the circumstances of Justice Powell's family, caused them to set all engines on work to restore the wife again to her husband. And his friends too for different reasons seem to have been as desirous of bringing about a reconciliation as her's, and this method of effecting it was concerted between them. He had a relation, one Blackborough, living in the lane of St. Martin's le-Grand, whom he often visited; and one day when he was visiting there, it was contrived that the wife should be ready in another room; and as he was thinking of nothing less, he was surprised to see her, whom he had expected never to have seen any more, falling down upon her knees at his feet, and imploring his forgiveness with tears. At first he showed some signs of aversion, but he continued not long inexorable; his wife's entreaties, and the intercession of friends on both sides, soon wrought upon his generous nature, and procured a happy reconciliation with an act of oblivion of all that was past. But he did not take his wife home immediately; it was agreed that she should remain at a friend's, till the house that he had newly taken was fitted for their reception; for some other gentlemen of his acquaintance, having observed the great success of his method of education, had recommended their sons to his care; and his house in Aldersgate-street not being large enough, he had taken a larger in Barbican: and till this could be got ready, the place pitched upon for his wife's abode was the widow Webber's house in St. Clement's Churchyard, whose second daughter had been married to the other brother many years before. The part that Milton acted in this whole affair, showed plainly that he had a spirit capable of the strongest resentment, but yet more inclinable to pity and forgiveness: and

neither in this was any injury done to the other lady whom he was courting, for she is said to have been always averse from the motion, not daring, I suppose, to venture in marriage with a man who was known to have a wife still living. He might not think himself too at liberty as before, while his wife continued obstinate; for his most plausible argument for divorce proceeds upon a supposition, that the thing be done with mutual consent.

After his wife's return his family was increased, not only with children, but also with his wife's relations, her father and mother, her brothers and sisters, coming to live with him in the general distress and ruin of the royal party; and he was so far from resenting their former ill-treatment of him, that he generously protected them, and entertained them very hospitably, till their affairs were accommodated through his interest with the prevailing faction. And then upon their removal, and the death of his own father, his house looked again like the house of the Muses; but his studies had like to have been interrupted by a call to public business, for about this time there was a design of constituting him adjutant-general in the army under Sir William Waller; but the new modelling of the army soon following, that design was laid aside. And not long after, his great house in Barbican being now too large for his family, he quitted it for a smaller in High Holborn, which opened backward into Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, where he prosecuted his studies till the king's trial and death, when the Presbyterians declaiming tragically against the king's execution, and asserting that his person was sacred and inviolable, provoked him to write the "Tenure of Kings and Magistrates," proving that it is lawful to call a tyrant to account, and to depose and put him to death, and that they who of late so much blame deposing are the men who did it themselves; and he published it at the beginning of the year 1649, to satisfy and compose the minds of the people. Not long after this he wrote his "Observations on the Articles of Peace between the Earl of Ormond and the Irish Rebels." And in these and all his writings, whatever others of different parties may think, he thought himself an advocate for true liberty: for ecclesiastical liberty in his treatises against the bishops, for domestic liberty in his books of divorce, and for civil liberty in his writing against the king in defence of the parliament and people of England.

After this he retired again to his private studies; and thinking that he had leisure enough for such a work, he applied himself to the writing of a "History of England," which he intended to deduce from the earliest accounts down to his own times; and he had finished four books of it, when neither courting nor expecting any such preferment, he was invited by the Council of State to be their Latin Secretary for foreign affairs. And he served in the same capacity under Oliver, and Richard, and the Rump, till the Restoration; and without doubt a better Latin pen could not have been found in the kingdom. For the Republic and Cromwell scorned to pay that tribute to any foreign prince, which is usually paid to the French king, of managing their affairs in his language; they thought it an indignity and meanness, to which this or any free nation ought not to submit; and took a resolution neither to write any letters to any foreign states, nor to receive any answers from them, but in the Latin tongue, which was common to them all.

But it was not only in foreign despatches that the Government made use of his pen. He had discharged the business of his office a very little time, before he was called to a work of another kind. For soon after the king's death was published a book under his name entitled "Eikon Basilike," or the Royal Image; and this book, like Cæsar's last will, making a deeper impression, and exciting greater commiseration in the minds of the people, than the king himself did while alive, Milton was ordered to prepare an answer to it, which was published by authority, and entitled "Eikonoklastes," or the Image Breaker, the famous surname of many Greek emperors, who, in their zeal against idolatry, broke all superstitious images to pieces.

But his most celebrated work in prose is his "Defence of the People of England" against Salmasius, "Defensio pro populo Anglicano contra Claudii Anonymi, alias Salmasii, Defensionem Regiam." Salmasius, by birth a Frenchman, succeeded the famous Scaliger as honorary professor of the University of Leyden, and had gained great reputation by his "Plinian Exercitations on Solinus," and by his critical remarks on several Latin and Greek authors, and was generally esteemed one of the greatest and most consummate scholars of that age, besides possessing extraordinary talents in railing. "This prince of scholars," as somebody said of him, "seemed to have erected his throne upon a heap

of stones, that he might have them at hand to throw at every one's head who passed by." He was therefore courted by Charles II., as the most able man to write a defence of the late king his father, and to traduce his adversaries, and a hundred Jacobuses were given him for that purpose, and the book was published in 1649 with this title "Defensio Regia pro Carolo I. ad Carolum II." No sooner did this book appear in England, but the Council of State unanimously appointed Milton, who was then present, to answer it: and he performed the task with amazing spirit and vigour, though his health at that time was such, that he could hardly endure the fatigue of writing, and being weak in body he was forced to write by piecemeal, and to break off almost every hour, as he says himself in the introduction. This necessarily occasioned some delay, so that his "Defence" was not made public till the beginning of the year 1651. It was somewhat extraordinary that Salmasius, a pensioner to a republic, should pretend to write a defence of monarchy; but the States showed their disapprobation by publicly condemning his book, and ordering it to be suppressed. And, on the other hand, Milton's book was burned at Paris and at Toulouse by the hands of the common hangman; but this served only to procure it the more readers: it was read and talked of every where, and even they who were of different principles, yet could not but acknowledge that he was a good defender of a bad cause; and Salmasius's book underwent only one impression, while this of Milton passed through several editions. On the first appearance of it, he was visited or invited by all the foreign ministers at London, not excepting even those of crowned heads; and was particularly honoured and esteemed by Adrian Paaw, ambassador from the States of Holland. He was likewise highly complimented by letters from the most learned and ingenious persons in France and Germany; and Leonard Philares, an Athenian born, and ambassador from the Duke of Parma to the French king, wrote a fine encomium of his "Defence," and sent him his picture, as appears from Milton's letter to Philares dated at London in June 1652. And what gave him the greatest satisfaction, the work was highly applauded by those who had desired him to undertake it; and they made him a present of a thousand pounds, which, in those days of frugality, was reckoned no inconsiderable reward for his performance

But the case was far otherwise with Salmasius. He was then in high favour at the court of Christina, Queen of Sweden, who had invited thither several of the most learned men of all countries; but when Milton's "Defence of the People of England" was brought to Sweden, and was read to the Queen at her own desire, he sunk immediately in her esteem and the opinion of every body; and though he talked big at first, and vowed the destruction of Milton and the Parliament, yet finding that he was looked upon with coldness, he thought proper to take leave of the court; and he who came in honour, was dismissed with contempt. He died some time afterwards at Spa in Germany, and it is said more of a broken heart than of any distemper, leaving a posthumous reply to Milton, which was not published till after the Restoration, and was dedicated to Charles II. by his son Claudius; but it has done no great honour to his memory, abounding with abuse much more than argument.

It is probable that Milton, when he was first made Latin Secretary, removed from his house in High Holborn to be nearer Whitehall: and for some time he had lodgings at one Thompson's, next door to the Bull Head Tavern, at Charing Cross, opening into Spring Garden, till the apartment appointed for him in Scotland Yard could be got ready for his reception. He then removed thither; and there his third child, a son, was born, and named John, who, through the ill usage or bad constitution of the nurse, died an infant. His own health, too, was greatly impaired; and for the benefit of the air he removed from his apartment in Scotland Yard, to a house in Petty France, Westminster, which was next door to Lord Scudamore's, and opened into St. James's Park, and there he remained eight years, from the year 1652, till within a few weeks of the king's restoration. In this house he had not been settled long, before his first wife died in childbed; and his condition requiring some care and attendance, he was easily induced, after a proper interval of time, to marry a second, who was Catharine, daughter of Captain Woodcock, of Hackney: and she too died in childbed within a year after their marriage, and her child, who was a daughter, died in a month after her; and her husband has done honour to her memory in one of his sonnets.

Two or three years before this second marriage, he had totally lost his sight. And his enemies triumphed in his

blindness, and imputed it as a judgment upon him for writing against the king; but his sight had been decaying several years before, through his close application to study, and the frequent head-aches to which he had been subject from his childhood, and his continual tampering with physic, which, perhaps, was more pernicious than all the rest. It was the sight of his left eye that he lost first: and at the desire of his friend, Leonard Philares, the Duke of Parma's minister at Paris, he sent him a particular account of his case, and of the manner of his growing blind, for him to consult Thevenot, the physician, who was reckoned famous in cases of the eyes. The letter is the fifteenth of his familiar epistles, and is dated September 28, 1654; but it does not appear what answer he received; we may presume, none that administered any relief. His blindness, however, did not disable him entirely from performing the business of his office. An assistant was allowed him, and his salary as secretary still continued to him.

The controversy with Salmasius did not die with him, and there was published at the Hague in 1652, a book entitled the "Cry of the King's Blood," &c., "Regii Sanguinis Clamor ad Cœlum adversus Parricidas Anglicanos." The true author of this book was Peter du Moulin the younger, who was afterwards prebendary of Canterbury; and he transmitted his papers to Salmasius; and Salmasius entrusted them to the care of Alexander Morus, a French minister, and Morus published them with a dedication to King Charles II., in the name of Adrian Ulac, the printer, from whence he came to be reputed the author of the whole. This Morus was the son of a learned Scotchman, who was president of the college which the Protestants had formerly at Castres, in Languedoc, and he is said to have been a man of a most haughty and licentious disposition, hasty, ambitious, full of himself and his own performances, and satirical upon all others. He was, however, esteemed one of the most eminent preachers of that age among the Protestants; but as Bayle observes, his chief talent must have consisted in the gracefulness of his delivery, or in those sallies of imagination and quaint turns and allusions, whereof his sermons are full; for they retain not those charms in reading which they were said to have formerly in the pulpit. Against this man, therefore, as the reputed author of "Regii Sanguinis Clamor," &c., Milton published by authority his "Second Defence of the People of England,"

"Defensio Secunda pro Populo Anglicano," in 1654, and treats Morus with such severity as nothing could have excused, if he had not been provoked to it by so much abuse poured upon himself.

This controversy being ended, he was at leisure again to pursue his own private studies, which were the History of England before mentioned, and a Thesaurus of the Latin tongue, intended as an improvement upon that by Robert Stephens, a work which he had been long collecting from the best and purest Latin authors, and continued at times almost to his dying day: but his papers were left so confused and imperfect, that they could not be fitted for the press, though great use was made of them by the compilers of the Cambridge Dictionary printed in 1693.

In fact, the only interruption now of his private studies was the business of his office. His blindness had not diminished, but rather increased the vigour of his mind: and his state letters will remain as authentic memorials of those times, to be admired equally by critics and politicians, and those particularly about the sufferings of the poor Protestants in Piedmont, who can read without sensible emotion? This was a subject that he had very much at heart, as he was an utter enemy to all sorts of persecution; and among his sonnets there is a most excellent one upon the same occasion.

But Oliver Cromwell being dead, and the government weak and unsettled in the hands of Richard and the Parliament, he thought it a seasonable time again to offer his advice to the public; and in 1659 published a treatise of civil power in ecclesiastical causes; and another tract, entitled "Considerations touching the likeliest means to remove hirelings out of the Church;" both addressed to the Parliament of the Commonwealth of England. But still finding, at the dissolution of Parliament, that affairs were every day tending more and more to the subversion of the Commonwealth and the restoration of the royal family, he published his "Ready and easy way to establish a free commonwealth, and the excellence thereof, compared with the inconveniences and dangers of re-admitting kingship in this nation." This piece is said to have been published in February 1659-60; and after this he published, "Brief notes upon a late Sermon entitled, 'The Fear of God and the King,' preached by Dr. Matthew Griffith, at Mercers' Chapel, March 25, 1660:" so bold and resolute was he in declaring

his sentiments to the last, thinking that his voice was the voice of expiring liberty.

A little before the King's landing he was discharged from his office of Latin Secretary, and was forced to leave his house in Petty France, where he had lived eight years with great reputation, and had been visited by all foreigners of note, who could not go out of the country without seeing a man who did so much honour to it by his writings, and whose name was as well known and as famous abroad as in his own nation, and by several persons of quality of both sexes. But now it was not safe for him to appear any longer in public, so that, by the advice of some who wished him well, and were concerned for his preservation, he fled for shelter to a friend's house in Bartholomew Close, near West Smithfield, where he lay concealed till the worst of the storm was blown over. The first notice that we find taken of him was on Saturday, the 16th of June 1660, when it was ordered by the House of Commons, that his Majesty should be humbly moved to issue his proclamation for the calling in of Milton's two books, his "Defence of the People" and "Iconoclastes," and also Goodwyn's book, intitled "The Obstructors of Justice," written in justification of the murder of the late king, and to order them to be burned by the hands of the common hangman. At the same time it was ordered that the Attorney General should proceed by way of indictment or information against Milton and Goodwyn in respect of their books, and that they themselves should be sent for in custody of the sergeant-at-arms attending the house. On Wednesday, June 27th, an order of council was made agreeable to the order of the House of Commons for a proclamation against Milton's and Goodwyn's books; and the proclamation was issued the 13th of August following, wherein it was said that the authors had fled or did abscond: and on Monday, August 27th, Milton's and Goodwyn's books were burned, according to the proclamation, at the Old Bailey, by the hands of the common hangman. On Wednesday, August 29th, the act of indemnity was passed, which proved more favourable to Milton than could well have been expected; for though John Goodwyn, Clerk, was excepted among the twenty persons, who were to have penalties inflicted upon them, not extending to life, yet Milton was not excepted at all, and consequently was included in the general pardon. We find, indeed, that afterwards he was in custody of the ser-

geant-at-arms; but the time when he was taken into custody is not certain.

At all events, on Saturday the 15th of December 1660, it was ordered by the House of Commons, that Mr. Milton, now in custody of the sergeant-at-arms, should be forthwith released, paying his fees; and on Monday the 17th of December, a complaint being made that the sergeant-at-arms had demanded excessive fees for his imprisonment, it was referred to the committee of privileges and elections to examine this business, and to call Mr. Milton and the sergeant before them, and to determine what was fit to be given to the sergeant for his fees in this case; so courageous was he at all times in defence of liberty against all the encroachments of power, and though a prisoner, would yet be treated like a freeborn Englishman. The clemency of the Government was certainly very great towards him, considering the nature of his offences; for though he was not one of the King's judges and murderers, yet he contributed more to murder his character and reputation than any of them all: and to what, therefore, could it be owing, that he was treated with such lenity, and was so easily pardoned? It is certain there was not wanting powerful intercession for him both in council and in parliament. It is said that Secretary Morrice and Sir Thomas Clargis greatly favoured him, and exerted their interest in his behalf; and his old friend Andrew Marvel, member of parliament for Hull, formed a considerable party for him in the House of Commons; and neither was Charles the Second (as Toland says) such an enemy to the Muses, as to require his destruction. But the principal instrument in obtaining Milton's pardon was Sir William Davenant, out of gratitude for Milton's having procured his release when he was taken prisoner in 1650.

Milton, having thus obtained his pardon, and being set at liberty again, took a house in Holborn, near Red Lion Fields; but he removed soon into Jewin Street, near Aldersgate Street; and while he lived there, being in his 53rd or 54th year, and blind and infirm, and wanting somebody better than servants to tend and look after him, he employed his friend Dr. Paget to choose a proper consort for him; and at his recommendation married his third wife, Elizabeth Minshul, of a gentleman's family in Cheshire, and related to Dr. Paget It is said that an offer was made to Milton, as well as to Thurloe, of holding the same

place of secretary under the King, which he had discharged with so much integrity and ability under Cromwell; but he persisted in refusing it, though his wife pressed his compliance; "Thou art in the right," says he, "you, like other women, would ride in your coach; for me, my aim is to live and die an honest man."

While he lived in Jewin Street, Elwood the Quaker was first introduced to read to him; for having wholly lost his sight, he always kept somebody or other to perform that office, and usually the son of some gentleman of his acquaintance, whom he took in kindness, that he might at the same time improve him in his learning. Elwood was recommended to him by Dr. Paget, and went to his house every afternoon, except Sunday, and read to him such books in the Latin tongue as Milton thought proper.

His great work of "Paradise Lost" had principally engaged his thoughts for some years past, and was now completed. It is probable that his first design of writing an epic poem was owing to his conversations at Naples with the Marquis of Villa about Tasso and his famous poem of the delivery of Jerusalem; and in a copy of verses presented to that nobleman before he left Naples, he intimated his intention of fixing upon King Arthur for his hero. Although he often repeated his promise to produce some noble poem or other at a fitter season, it does not appear that he had then determined upon the subject, and King Arthur had another fate, being reserved for the pen of Sir Richard Blackmore. The first hint of "Paradise Lost" is said to have been taken from an Italian tragedy; and it is certain, that he first designed it a tragedy himself, and there are several plans of it in the form of a tragedy still to be seen in the author's own manuscript, preserved in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge. And it is probable that he did not barely sketch out the plans, but also wrote some parts of the drama itself. It was not till after he was disengaged from the Salmasian controversy, which ended in 1655, that he began to mould the "Paradise Lost" in its present form; but after the Restoration, when he was dismissed from public business, and freed from controversy, he prosecuted the work with closer application. Mr. Philips relates a very remarkable circumstance in the composition of this poem, which he says he had reason to remember, as it was told him by Milton himself, that his vein never happily flowed but from the autumnal equinox

to the vernal, and that what he attempted at other times was not to his satisfaction, though he courted his fancy never so much; but whenever the poem was written, it was finished in 1665, and, as Elwood says, was shown to him that same year at St. Giles Chalfont, whither Milton had retired to avoid the plague, and it was lent to him to peruse it and pass his judgment upon it: and, considering the difficulties which the author lay under, his uneasiness on account of the public affairs and his own, his age and infirmities, his gout and blindness, his not being in circumstances to maintain an amanuensis, but obliged to make use of any hand that came next to write his verses as he made them; it is really wonderful that he should have the spirit to undertake such a work, and much more, that he should ever have brought it to perfection. And after the poem was finished, still new difficulties retarded the publication of it. It was in danger of being suppressed through the malice or ignorance of the licenser, who took exception at some passages, and particularly at that noble simile, in the first book, of the sun in an eclipse, in which he fancied that he had discovered treason. It was with difficulty, too, that the author could sell the copy; and he sold it at last only for five pounds, but was to receive five pounds more after the sale of 1,300 of the first impression, and five pounds more after the sale of as many of the second impression, and five more after the sale of as many of the third, and the number of each impression was not to exceed 1,500. And what a poor consideration was this for such an inestimable performance! and how much more do others get by the works of great authors, than the authors themselves! And yet we find that Hoyle, the author of the "Treatise on the Game of Whist," after having disposed of the whole of the first impression, sold the copy to the bookseller for two hundred guineas.

Without entering into a detailed account of the numerous editions of this splendid and ever-popular poem, we may observe that it has been a source of imitation and criticism in all countries, and that the greatest critics have eagerly given their labours to its illustration and correction. It has also been translated into several languages, Latin, Italian, French, and Dutch; and proposals have been made[1]

[1] By the late R. Dawes, author of the "Miscellanea Criticæ," and by others before his time.

for translating it into Greek. The Dutch translation is in blank verse, and printed at Haarlem. So that by one means or other, Milton is now considered as an English classic; and the "Paradise Lost" is generally esteemed the noblest and most sublime of modern poems, and equal at least to the best of the ancient: the honour of this country, and the envy and admiration of all others.

In 1670 he published his "History of Britain," that part especially now called England. He began it above twenty years before, but was frequently interrupted by other avocations; and he designed to have brought it down to his own times, but stopped at the Norman conquest; for indeed he was not well able to pursue it any farther by reason of his blindness, and he was engaged in other more delightful studies, having a genius turned for poetry rather than history. When his history was printed, it was not printed perfect and entire; for the licenser expunged several passages, which, reflecting upon the pride and superstition of the monks in the Saxon times, were understood as a concealed satire upon the bishops in Charles the Second's reign. But the author himself gave a copy of his unlicensed papers to the Earl of Anglesea, who, as well as several of the nobility and gentry, constantly visited him: and in 1681, a considerable passage, which had been suppressed at the beginning of the third book, was published, containing a character of the Long Parliament and Assembly of Divines in 1641, which was inserted in its proper place in the last edition of 1738.

In 1670 likewise, his "Paradise Regained" and "Samson Agonistes" were licensed together, but were not published till the year following. It is somewhat remarkable that these two poems were not printed by Simmons, the printer of "Paradise Lost," but by J. M., for one Starkey, in Fleet Street: and what could induce Milton to have recourse to another printer?—was it because the former was not enough encouraged by the sale of "Paradise Lost" to become a purchaser of the other copies? The first thought of "Paradise Regained" was owing to Elwood, the Quaker, as he himself relates the occasion, in the history of his life. When Milton had lent him the manuscript of "Paradise Lost," at St. Giles Chalfont, as we said before, and he returned it, Milton asked him how he liked it, and what he thought of it: "which I modestly, but freely told him," says Elwood;

"and after some further discourse about it, I pleasantly said to him, 'Thou hast said much of Paradise Lost, but what hast thou to say of Paradise Found?' He made me no answer, but sat some time in a muse; then broke off that discourse, and fell upon another subject." When Elwood afterwards waited upon him in London, Milton showed him his "Paradise Regained," and in a pleasant tone said to him, "This is owing to you, for you put it into my head by the question you put me at Chalfont, which before I had not thought of." It is commonly reported, that Milton himself preferred this poem to the "Paradise Lost;" but all that we can assert upon good authority is, that he could not endure to hear this poem cried down so much as it was, in comparison with the other. For certainly it is very worthy of the author, and contrary to what Mr. Toland relates. Milton may be seen in "Paradise Regained," as well as in "Paradise Lost." If it is inferior in poetry, I know not whether it is not superior in sentiment; if it is less descriptive, it is more argumentative; if it does not sometimes rise so high, neither does it ever sink so low; and it has not met with the approbation it deserves, only because it has not been more read and considered. His subject, indeed, is confined, and he has a narrow foundation to build upon; but he has raised as noble a superstructure, as such little room and such scanty materials would allow. The great beauty of it is the contrast between the two characters of the Tempter and our Saviour, the artful sophistry and specious insinuations of the one refuted by the strong sense and manly eloquence of the other. This poem has also been translated into French, together with some other pieces of Milton—"Lycidas," "L'Allegro," "Il Penseroso," and the "Ode on Christ's Nativity;" while it has met with commentators of equal ability with those who have devoted their labours to "Paradise Lost." His "Samson Agonistes" is the only tragedy that he has finished, though he has sketched out the plans of several, and proposed the subjects of more, in his manuscript preserved in Trinity College Library: and we may suppose that he was determined to the choice of this particular subject by the similitude of his own circumstances to those of Samson blind, and among the Philistines. This I conceive to be the last of his poetical pieces; and it is written in the very spirit of the ancients, and equals, if not exceeds, any of the most perfect tragedies which were ever exhibited on the Athenian stage when Greece was in its

glory. As this work was never intended for the stage, the division into acts and scenes is omitted. Bishop Atterbury had an intention of getting Mr. Pope to divide it into acts and scenes, and of having it acted by the king's scholars at Westminster; but his commitment to the Tower put an end to that design. It has since been brought upon the stage in the form of an oratorio; and Handel's music is never employed to greater advantage, than when it is adapted to Milton's words. That great artist has done equal justice to our author's "L'Allegro," and "Il Penseroso," as if the same spirit possessed both masters, and as if the god of music and of verse was still one and the same.

There are also some other pieces of Milton, for he continued publishing to the last. In 1672, he published "Artis Logicæ plenior Institutio ad Petri Rami methodum concinnata," an institution of logic, after the method of Petrus Ramus; and the year following, a treatise of true religion, and the best means to prevent the growth of Popery, which had greatly increased through the connivance of the King, and the more open encouragement of the Duke of York; and the same year, his poems, which had been printed in 1645, were reprinted, with the addition of several others. His familiar epistles, and some academical exercises, "Epistolarum familiarium, Lib. I., et Prolusiones quædam Oratoriæ in Collegio Christi habitæ," were printed in 1674; as was also his translation out of Latin into English of the Poles' declaration concerning the election of their king John III., setting forth the virtues and merits of that prince. He wrote also a brief history of Muscovy, collected from the relations of several travellers; but it was not printed till after his death in 1682. He had likewise his state letters transcribed at the request of the Danish resident, but neither were they printed till after his death in 1676, and were translated into English in 1694; and to that translation a life of Milton was prefixed by his nephew, Mr. Edward Philips, and at the end of that life his excellent sonnets to Fairfax, Cromwell, Sir Henry Vane, and Cyriac Skinner on his blindness, were first printed.

After a life thus spent in study and labours for the public, he died of the gout at his house in Bunhill-row, on or about the 10th of November, 1674, when he had within a month completed the sixty-fifth year of his age. It is not known when he was first attacked by the gout; but he was grievously afflicted with it several of the last years of his

life, and was weakened to such a degree that he died without a groan, and those in the room perceived not when he expired. His body was decently interred near that of his father (who had died very aged about the year 1647), in the chancel of the church of St. Giles's, Cripplegate; and all his great and learned friends in London, not without a friendly concourse of the common people, paid their last respects in attending it to the grave. A monument has been erected to his memory in Westminster Abbey by Auditor Benson, in the year 1737; but the best monument of him is his writings.

In his youth he was esteemed extremely handsome; so that, while he was a student at Cambridge, he was called the Lady of Christ's College. He had a very fine skin and fresh complexion: his hair was of a light brown, and, parted on the foretop, hung down in curls waving upon his shoulders; his features were exact and regular; his voice agreeable and musical; his habit clean and neat; his deportment erect and manly. He was middle-sized and well-proportioned, neither tall nor short, neither too lean nor too corpulent, strong and active in his younger years, and, though afflicted with frequent headaches, blindness, and gout, was yet a comely and well-looking man to the last. His eyes were of a light blue colour, and from the first are said to have been none of the brightest, but after he lost the sight of them (which happened about the 43rd year of his age), they still appeared without spot or blemish, and at first view, and at a little distance, it was not easy to know that he was blind.

In his way of living he was an example of sobriety and temperance. He was very sparing in the use of wine or strong liquors of any kind. He wanted not any artificial spirits; he had a natural fire and poetic warmth enough of his own. He was likewise very abstemious in his diet; not fastidiously nice or delicate in the choice of his dishes, but content with anything that was most in season, or easiest to be procured; eating and drinking (according to the distinction of Socrates) that he might live, and not living that he might eat and drink. So that probably his gout descended by inheritance from one or other of his parents; or, if it was of his own acquiring, it must have been owing to his studious and sedentary life. And yet he delighted sometimes in walking and using exercise, but we hear nothing of his riding or hunting; and, having early learned

to fence, he was such a master of his sword, that he was not afraid of resenting an affront from any man; and, before he lost his sight, his principal recreation was the exercise of his arms; but after he was confined by age and blindness, he had a machine to swing in for the preservation of his health. In his youth he was accustomed to sit up late at his studies, and seldom went to bed before midnight; but afterwards, finding it to be the ruin of his eyes, and looking on this custom as very pernicious to health at any time, he used to go to rest early, seldom later than nine, and would be stirring in the summer at four, and in the winter at five in the morning; but if he was not disposed to rise at his usual hours, he still did not lie sleeping, but had somebody or other by his bedside to read to him. At his first rising he had usually a chapter read to him out of the Hebrew Bible; and he commonly studied all the morning till twelve, then used some exercise for an hour, afterwards dined, and after dinner played on the organ, and either sung himself or made his wife sing, who (he said) had a good voice but no ear; and then he went up to study again till six, when his friends came to visit him, and sat with him perhaps till eight; then he went down to supper, which was usually olives or some light thing; and after supper he smoked his pipe, and drank a glass of water, and went to bed. He loved the country, and commends it, as poets usually do; but after his return from his travels, he was very little there, except during the time of the plague in London. The civil war might at first detain him in town; and the pleasures of the country were in a great measure lost to him, as they depend mostly upon sight, whereas a blind man wants company and conversation, which is to be had better in populous cities. But he was led out sometimes for the benefit of the fresh air; and in warm sunny weather he used to sit at the door of his house near Bunhill Fields, and there, as well as in the house, received the visits of persons of quality and distinction; for he was no less visited to the last both by his own countrymen and foreigners, than he had been in his flourishing condition before the Restoration.

Some objections indeed have been made to his temper, to which his method of writing controversy might seem to give colour; but some allowance must be made for the customs and manners of the time. Controversy as well as war was rougher and more barbarous in those days than it is in

these. And it is to be considered, too, that his adversaries first began the attack: they loaded him with much more personal abuse, only they had not the advantage of so much wit to season it. If he had engaged with more candid and ingenuous disputants, he would have preferred civility and fair argument to wit and satire: "To do so was my choice, and to have done thus was my chance," as he expresses himself in the conclusion of one of his controversial pieces. All who have written any accounts of his life agree that he was affable and instructive in conversation, of an equal and cheerful temper; and yet I can easily believe that he had a sufficient sense of his own merits, and contempt enough for his adversaries.

His merits, indeed, were singular; for he was a man not only of wonderful genius, but of immense learning and erudition; not only an incomparable poet, but a great mathematician, logician, historian, and divine. He was a master not only of the Greek and Latin, but likewise of the Hebrew, Chaldee, and Syriac, as well as of the modern languages, Italian, French, and Spanish. He was particularly skilled in the Italian, which he always preferred to the French language; and he not only wrote elegantly in it, but is highly commended for his writings by the most learned of the Italians themselves. He had read almost all authors, and improved by all, even by romances, of which he had been fond in his younger years; and as the bee can extract honey out of weeds, so (to use his own words) "those books, which to many others have been the fuel of wantonness and loose living, proved to him so many incitements to the love and observation of virtue." His favourite author, after the Holy Scriptures, was Homer, whom he could repeat almost all without book; and he was advised to undertake a translation of his works, which no doubt he would have executed to admiration. But (as he says of himself in his postscript to the "Judgment of Martin Bucer"), "he never could delight in long citations, much less in whole traductions." He was possessed too much of an original genius to be a mere copier. "Whether it be natural disposition," says he, "or education in me, or that my mother bore me a speaker of what God made my own, and not a translator." After his severer studies, and after dinner, as we observed before, he used to divert and unbend his mind with music, of which he was as much a master as was his father, and he could perform both vocally and

instrumentally, and it is said that he composed very well, though nothing of this kind is handed down to us. It is also said that he had some skill in painting as well as in music, and that somewhere or other there is a head of Milton drawn by himself He had a quick apprehension, a sublime imagination, a strong memory, a piercing judgment, a wit always ready, and facetious or grave as the occasion required: and I know not whether the loss of his sight did not add vigour to the faculties of his mind He at least thought so, and often comforted himself with that reflection.

But his great parts and learning have scarcely gained him more admirers than his political principles have raised him enemies. And yet the darling passion of his soul was the love of liberty; this was his constant aim and end, however he might be mistaken in the means. He was, indeed, very zealous in what was called the good old cause, and with his spirit and his resolution it is somewhat wonderful that he never ventured his person in the civil war; but though he was not in arms, he was not unactive, and thought, I suppose, that he could be of more service to the cause by his pen than by his sword. He was a thorough republican, and in this he thought like a Greek or Roman, as he was very conversant with their writings. And one day, Sir Robert Howard, who was a friend to Milton as well as to the liberties of his country, and was one of his constant visitors to the last, inquired of him how he came to side with the republicans Milton answered, among other reasons, because theirs was the most frugal government, for the trappings of a monarchy might set up an ordinary commonwealth. But then, his attachment to Cromwell must be condemned, as being neither consistent with his republican principles, nor with his love of liberty. And I know no other way of accounting for his conduct, but by presuming (as I think we may reasonably presume) that he was far from entirely approving of Cromwell's proceedings, but considered him as the only person who could rescue the nation from the tyranny of the Presbyterians, who he saw were erecting a worse dominion of their own upon the ruins of prelatical episcopacy; and of all things he dreaded spiritual slavery, and therefore closed with Cromwell and the Independents, as he expected under them greater liberty of conscience. And though he served Cromwell, yet it must be said for him that he served a great master,

and served him ably, and was not wanting from time to time, in giving him excellent good advice, especially in his second defence.

In matters of religion, too, he has given as great offence, or even greater, than by his political principles. But still let not the infidel glory: no such man was ever of that party. He had the advantage of a pious education, and ever expressed the profoundest reverence of the Deity in his words and actions, was both a Christian and a Protestant, and studied and admired the Holy Scriptures above all other books whatsoever; and in all his writings he plainly shows a religious turn of mind, as well in verse as in prose, as well in his works of an earlier date as in those of later composition. When he wrote the "Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce," he appears to have been a Calvinist; but afterwards he entertained a more favourable opinion of Arminius. Some have inclined to believe that he was an Arian; but there are more express passages in his works to overthrow this opinion, than any there are to confirm it.

Milton was indeed a dissenter from the Church of England, in which he had been educated, and was by his parents designed for holy orders, as we related before; but he was led away by early prejudices against the doctrine and discipline of the Church; and in his younger years was a favourer of the Presbyterians; in his middle age he was best pleased with the Independents and Anabaptists, as allowing greater liberty of conscience than others, and coming nearest in his opinion to the primitive practice; and in the latter part of his life he was not a professed member of any particular sect of Christians, he frequented no public worship, nor used any religious rite in his family. Whether so many different forms of worship as he had seen, had made him indifferent to all forms; or whether he thought that all Christians had in some things corrupted the purity and simplicity of the Gospel; or whether he disliked their endless and uncharitable disputes, and that love of dominion and inclination to persecution which he said was a piece of Popery inseparable from all Churches; or whether he believed that a man might be a good Christian without joining in any communion; or whether he did not look upon himself as inspired, as wrapped up in God, and above all forms and ceremonies, it is not easy to determine—"to his own master he standeth or falleth;"

but if he was of any denomination, he was a sort of a Quietist, and was full of the interior of religion, though he so little regarded the exterior; and it is certain was to the last an enthusiast rather than an infidel.

His circumstances were never very mean, nor very great; for he lived above want, and was not intent upon accumulating wealth; his ambition was more to enrich and adorn his mind. His father supported him in his travels, and for some time after. Then his pupils must have been of some advantage to him, and brought him either a certain stipend or considerable presents at least; and he had scarcely any other method of improving his fortune, as he was of no possession. When his father died, he inherited an elder son's share of his estate, the principal part of which, I believe, was his house in Bread-street. And not long after, he was appointed Latin Secretary with a salary of 200*l.* a year; so that he was now in opulent circumstances for a man who had always led a frugal and temperate life, and was at little unnecessary expense besides buying of books. Though he was of the victorious party, yet he was far from sharing in the spoils of his country. On the contrary (as we learn from his second "Defence") he sustained great losses during the civil war, and was not at all favoured in the imposition of taxes, but sometimes paid beyond his due proportion. And, upon a turn of affairs, he was not only deprived of his place, but also lost 2,000*l.*, which he had for security and improvement put into the Excise Office. He lost likewise another considerable sum for want of proper care and management, as persons of Milton's genius are seldom expert in money matters. And in the fire of London his house in Bread-street was burned, before which accident foreigners have gone out of devotion (says Wood) to see the house and chamber where he was born. His gains were inconsiderable in proportion to his losses; for, excepting the thousand pounds which were given him by the Government for writing his "Defence of the People" against Salmasius, we may conclude that he got very little by the copies of his works, when it does not appear that he received any more than ten pounds for "Paradise Lost." Some time before he died he sold the greater part of his library, as his heirs were not qualified to make a proper use of it, and as he thought that he could dispose of it to greater advantage than they could after his decease. And finally, by one

means or other, he died worth one thousand five hundred pounds besides his household goods, which was no incompetent subsistence for him, who was as great a philosopher as a poet

IN PARADISUM AMISSAM

SUMMI POETÆ

JOHANNIS MILTONI.

Qui legis Amissam Paradisum, grandia magni
  Carmina Miltoni, quid nisi cuncta legis?
Res cunctas, et cunctarum primordia rerum,
  Et fata, et fines continet iste liber.
Intima panduntur magni penetralia mundi,
  Scribitur et toto quicquid in orbe latet:
Terræque, tractusque maris, cœlumque profundum,
  Sulphureumque Erebi, flammivomumque specus
Quæque colunt terras, pontumque, et Tartara cæca,
  Quæque colunt summi lucida regna poli:
Et quodcunque ullis conclusum est finibus usquam,
  Et sine fine Chaos, et sine fine Deus:
Et sine fine magis, si quid magis est sine fine,
  In Christo erga homines conciliatus amor.
Hæc qui speraret quis crederet esse futura?
  Et tamen hæc hodie terra Britanna legit.
O quantos in bella duces! quæ protulit arma!
  Quæ canit, et quanta prælia dira tuba!
Cœlestes acies! atque in certamine cœlum!
  Et quæ cœlestes pugna deceret agros!
Quantus in æthereis tollit se Lucifer armis!
  Atque ipso graditur vix Michaele minor!
Quantis, et quam funestis concurritur iris,
  Dum ferus hic stellas protegit, ille rapit!
Dum vulsos montes ceu tela reciproca torquent,
  Et non mortali desuper igne pluunt·

Stat dubius cui se parti concedat Olympus,
Et metuit pugnæ non superesse suæ.
At simul in cœlis Messiæ insignia fulgent,
Et currus animes, armaque digna Deo,
Horrendumque rotæ strident, et sæva rotarum
Erumpunt torvis fulgura luminibus,
Et flammæ vibrant, et vera tonitrua rauco
Admistis flammis insonuere polo:
Excidit attonitis mens omnis, et impetus omnis,
Et cassis dextris irrita tela cadunt;
Ad pœnas fugiunt, et ceu foret Orcus asylum,
Infernis certant condere se tenebris.
Cedite Romani Scriptores, cedite Graii,
Et quos fama recens vel celebravit anus.
Hæc quicunque leget tantùm cecinisse putabit
Mæonidem ranas, Virgilium culices.

SAMUEL BARROW, M.D.

ON PARADISE LOST.

When I beheld the poet blind, yet bold,
In slender book his vast design unfold,
Messiah crowned, God's reconciled decree,
Rebelling angels, the forbidden tree,
Heaven, Hell, Earth, Chaos, all; the argument
Held me a while, misdoubting his intent,
That he would ruin (for I saw him strong)
The sacred truths to fable and old song
(So Samson groped the temple's posts in spite),
The world o'erwhelming to revenge his sight.

Yet as I read, soon growing less severe,
I liked his project, the success did fear;
Through that wide field how he his way should find,
O'er which lame faith leads understanding blind;
Lest he perplexed the things he would explain,
And what was easy he should render vain.

Or if a work so infinite he spanned,
Jealous I was that some less skilful hand
(Such as disquiet always what is well,
And by ill imitating would excel)
Might hence presume the whole creation's day
To change in scenes, and show it in a play.

Pardon me, mighty poet, nor despise
My causeless, yet not impious, surmise.
But I am now convinced, and none will dare
Within thy labours to pretend a share.
Thou hast not missed one thought that could be fit,
And all that was improper dost omit:
So that no room is here for writers left,
But to detect their ignorance or theft.

That majesty, which through thy work doth reign,
Draws the devout, deterring the profane.
And things divine thou treat'st of in such state
As them preserves, and thee inviolate.
At once delight and horror on us seize,
Thou sing'st with so much gravity and ease;
And above human flight dost soar aloft
With plume so strong, so equal, and so soft.
The bird named from that Paradise you sing
So never flags, but always keeps on wing.

Where couldst thou words of such a compass find?
Whence furnish such a vast expense of mind?
Just Heaven thee, like Tiresias, to requite,
Rewards with prophecy thy loss of sight.

Well might'st thou scorn thy readers to allure
With tinkling rhyme, of thy own sense secure;
While the Town-Bays writes all the while and spells,
And like a pack-horse tires without his bells;
Their fancies like our bushy points appear,
The poets tag them, we for fashion wear.
I, too, transported by the mode, commend,
And while I mean to praise thee must offend.
Thy verse, created like thy theme sublime,
In number, weight, and measure, needs not rhyme.

ANDREW MARVEL.

Paradise Lost.

A POEM, IN TWELVE BOOKS.

THE VERSE.

THE measure is English heroic verse, without rhyme, as that of Homer in Greek, and of Virgil in Latin; rhyme being no necessary adjunct or true ornament of poem or good verse, in longer works especially, but the invention of a barbarous age, to set off wretched matter and lame metre; graced, indeed, since by the use of some famous modern poets, carried away by custom, but much to their own vexation, hindrance, and constraint, to express many things otherwise, and for the most part worse than else they would have expressed them. Not without cause, therefore, some both Italian and Spanish poets of prime note, have rejected rhyme both in longer and shorter works, as have also long since our best English tragedies, as a thing of itself, to all judicious ears, trivial, and of no true musical delight, which consists only in apt numbers, fit quantity of syllables, and the sense variously drawn out from one verse into another; not in the jingling sound of like endings—a fault avoided by the learned ancients both in poetry and all good oratory. This neglect, then, of rhyme, so little is to be taken for a defect, though it may seem so perhaps to vulgar readers, that it rather is to be esteemed an example set, the first in English, of ancient liberty recovered to heroic poem, from the troublesome and modern bondage of rhyming.

BOOK I.

THE ARGUMENT.

This First Book proposes, first in brief, the whole subject, Man's disobedience, and the loss thereupon of Paradise wherein he was placed: then touches the prime cause of his fall, the serpent, or rather Satan in the serpent; who revolting from God, and drawing to his side many legions of angels, was by the command of God driven out of Heaven, with all his crew, into the great deep. Which action passed over, the poem hastens into the midst of things, presenting Satan with his angels now fallen into Hell, described here, not in the centre (for Heaven and Earth may be supposed as yet not made, certainly not yet accursed), but in a place of utter darkness, fitliest called Chaos: here Satan with his angels lying on the burning lake, thunderstruck and astonished, after a certain space recovers, as from confusion, calls up him who next in order and dignity lay by him; they confer of their miserable fall. Satan awakens all his legions, who lay till then in the same manner confounded; they rise, their numbers, array of battle, their chief leaders named, according to the idols known afterwards in Canaan and the countries adjoining. To these Satan directs his speech, comforts them with hope yet of regaining Heaven, but tells them lastly of a new world and new kind of creature to be created, according to an ancient prophecy or report in Heaven; for that angels were long before this visible creation, was the opinion of many ancient fathers. To find out the truth of this prophecy, and what to determine thereon, he refers to a full council. What his associates thence attempt. Pandemonium, the palace of Satan, rises suddenly built out of the deep: the infernal peers there sit in council.

Of Man's first disobedience,[1] and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,

[1] Milton has proposed the subject of his poem in the following verses. These lines are perhaps as plain, simple, and unadorned, as any of the whole poem, in which particular the author has conformed himself to the example of Homer and the precept of Horace. His invocation to a work, which turns in a great measure upon the

Sing heavenly Muse, that on the secret[1] top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
That shepherd,[2] who first taught the chosen seed,
In the beginning how the Heavens and Earth
Rose out of Chaos: or if Sion hill
Delight thee more, and Siloa's[3] brook that flowed
Fast by the oracle of God, I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above the Aonian mount,[4] while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.
And chiefly Thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
Before all temples the upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for Thou knowest; Thou from the first
Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread

creation of the world, is very properly made to the muse who inspired Moses in those books from whence our author drew his subject, and to the Holy Spirit who is therein represented as operating after a particular manner in the first production of nature. This whole exordium rises very happily into noble language and sentiment, as I think the transition to the fable is exquisitely beautiful and natural.—*Addison.*

[1] Endless difficulties have been raised respecting this epithet, which, to us, seems perfectly clear and appropriate. The poet evidently refers to Horeb or Sinai (the two heights, be it remembered, of one mountain. See Calmet *in voce*, and Lepsius, Discoveries in Egypt, note F, p. 444, sq.), as the place where the Almighty held conversation with Moses, when there was "a thick cloud upon the mount" (Exod. xix. 16), and when the people were forbidden "to break through unto the Lord to gaze, lest they perish."—Cf. xii. 227.

> "God from the mount of Sinai, whose *gray top*
> Shall tremble, he descending."

Compare Robinson, Biblical Researches, v. i, p. 129—"Our conviction was strengthened that here, or on some of the adjacent cliffs, was the spot where the Lord 'descended in fire,' and proclaimed the law. Here lay the plain where the whole congregation might be assembled; here was the mount that could be approached, *if not forbidden*; and here the mountain's brow from where alone the lightnings *and thick cloud* would be visible, and the thunders and the voice of the trump be heard."

[2] Moses, Cf. Exod. iii. i.

[3] A small river near the temple of Jerusalem.—Cf. Is. viii. 6.

[4] *i. e.* above what other poets have attempted; the Aonian Mount in Bœotia being popularly supposed to be the haunt of the Muses.

P. 3.

PARADISE LOST.

What time his pride
Had cast him out from heaven.

Dove-like satst brooding[1] on the vast abyss,
And made it pregnant: what in me is dark
Illumine, what is low raise and support;
That to the height of this great argument
I may assert eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men.
Say first, for Heaven hides nothing from thy view,
Nor the deep tract of Hell; say first, what cause
Moved our grand parents, in that happy state,
Favoured of Heaven so highly, to fall off
From their Creator, and transgress his will
For one restraint, lords of the world besides?
Who first seduced them to that foul revolt?
Th' infernal Serpent; he it was, whose guile,
Stirred up with envy and revenge, deceived
The mother of mankind, what time his pride
Had cast him out from Heaven, with all his host
Of rebel angels, by whose aid aspiring
To set himself in glory above his peers,
He trusted to have equalled the Most High,
If he opposed; and with ambitious aim
Against the throne and monarchy of God
Raised impious war in Heaven, and battle proud
With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power
Hurled headlong flaming from the ethereal sky,
With hideous ruin and combustion, down
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
In adamantine chains and penal fire,
Who durst defy the Omnipotent to arms.
Nine times the space that measures day and night
To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
Lay vanquished, rolling in the fiery gulf,
Confounded though immortal: but his doom
Reserved him to more wrath; for now the thought
Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
Torments him: round he throws his baleful eyes,
That witnessed huge affliction and dismay
Mixed with obdurate pride and stedfast hate:
At once, as far as angels' ken, he views
The dismal situation waste and wild;
A dungeon horrible on all sides round

[1] From Genesis i. 2, "And the Spirit of God *brooded* upon the waters" (Hebrew).

As one great furnace flamed, yet from those flames
No light, but rather darkness visible[1]
Served only to discover sights of woe,
Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
That comes to all; but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
With ever-burning sulphur unconsumed:
Such place eternal Justice had prepared
For those rebellious, here their prison ordained
In utter[2] darkness, and their portion set
As far removed from God and light of Heaven,
As from the centre thrice to the utmost pole.[3]
Oh, how unlike the place from whence they fell!
There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelmed
With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,

[1] Milton seems to have used these words to signify *gloom:* absolute darkness is, strictly speaking, invisible; but where there is a gloom only, there is so much light remaining as serves to show that there are objects, and yet that those objects cannot be distinctly seen. In this sense Milton seems to use the strong and bold expression, *darkness visible.—Pearce.*

Seneca has a like expression, speaking of the Grotto of Pausilypo, Senec. Epist. lvii. Nihil illo carcere longius, nihil illis faucibus obscurius, quæ nobis præstant, non ut *per tenebras* videamus, sed ut *ipsas.* And, as Mons. Voltaire observes, Antonio de Solis, in his excellent History of Mexico, has ventured on the same thought, when speaking of the place wherein Montezuma was wont to consult his deities; "It was a large dark subterraneous vault, says he, where some dismal tapers afforded just light enough to see the obscurity." See his Essay on Epic Poetry, p. 44. So, too, Spenser, F. Q. i. 1. 14.

"A little glooming light, much like a shade."—*Newton.*

[2] Dr. Bentley reads *outer* here, and in many other places of this poem, because it is in scripture, τὸ σκότος τὸ ἐξώτερον; but *utter* and *outer* are both the same word, differently spelled and pronounced. Milton, in the argument of this book, says, *in a place of utter darkness,* and nowhere throughout the poem does the poet use *outer.—Pearce.*

Spenser justifies the present reading by frequently using the word *utter* for *outer,* as in Faërie Queen, b. ii. cant. ii. st. 34—

"And inly grieve, as doth an hidden moth
The inner garment fret, not *the outer* touch."—*Newton.*

[3] i. e. thrice as far as it is from the centre of the earth (which is the centre of the world according to Milton's system, ix. 103, x. 671) to the pole of the world; for it is the pole of the universe, far beyond the pole of the earth, which is here called the "utmost pole."—*Newton.*

He soon discerns, and weltering by his side
One next himself in power, and next in crime,
Long after known in Palestine, and named
Beëlzebub.[1] To whom the Arch-Enemy,
And thence in Heaven called Satan,[2] with bold words
Breaking the horrid silence thus began.
"If thou beest he; but oh, how fallen! how changed
From him, who in the happy realms of light
Clothed with transcendent brightness didst outshine
Myriads though bright! If he whom mutual league,
United thoughts and counsels, equal hope
And hazard in the glorious enterprise,
Joined with me once, now misery hath joined
In[3] equal ruin: into what pit thou seest
From what height fallen, so much the stronger proved
He with his thunder: and till then who knew
The force of those dire arms? yet not for those,
Nor what the potent victor in his rage
Can else inflict, do I repent or change,
Though changed in outward lustre, that fixed mind,
And high disdain from sense of injured merit,
That with the mightiest raised me to contend,
And to the fierce contention brought along
Innumerable force of spirits armed,
That durst dislike his reign, and me preferring,
His utmost power with adverse power opposed
In dubious battle on the plains of Heaven,
And shook his throne. What though the field be lost?
All is not lost; the unconquerable will,
And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield,
And what is else not to be overcome;
That glory never shall his wrath or might
Extort from me. To bow and sue for *grace*
With suppliant knee, and deify his power,
Who from the terror of this arm so late
Doubted his empire; that were low indeed,
That were an ignominy and shame beneath

[1] The lord of flies, an idol worshipped at Ecron, a city of the Philistines, 2 Kings i. 2. He is called "prince of the devils," Matt. xii. 24, therefore deservedly here made second to Satan himself.—*Hume.*

[2] Satan, in Hebrew, means *an enemy.*

[3] Rather, "*and* equal ruin," as Bentley reads.

This downfall; since by fate[1] the strength of gods
And this empyreal substance cannot fail,
Since through experience of this great event
In arms not worse, in foresight much advanced,
We may with more successful hope resolve
To wage by force or guile eternal war,
Irreconcileable to our grand foe,
Who now triumphs, and in the excess of joy
Sole reigning holds the tyranny of Heaven."

So spake the apostate angel, though in pain,
Vaunting aloud, but racked with deep despair:
And him thus answered soon his bold compeer.

"O prince, O chief of many throned powers,
That led the embattled seraphim to war
Under thy conduct, and in dreadful deeds
Fearless, endangered Heaven's perpetual King,
And put to proof his high supremacy,
Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate,
Too well I see and rue the dire event,
That with sad overthrow and foul defeat
Hath lost us Heaven, and all this mighty host
In horrible destruction laid thus low,
As far as gods and heavenly essences
Can perish: for the mind and spirit remains
Invincible, and vigour soon returns,
Though all our glory extinct, and happy state
Here swallowed up in endless misery.
But what if he our Conqueror (whom I now
Of force believe almighty, since no less
Than such could have o'erpowered such force as ours)
Have left us this our spirit and strength entire
Strongly to suffer and support our pains,
That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,
Or do him mightier service as his thralls
By right of war, whate'er his business be,
Here in the heart of Hell to work in fire,

[1] Satan supposes the angels to subsist by fate and necessity, and he represents them of an *empyreal*, that is a *fiery* substance, as the Scripture itself doth: "He maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire," Psalm civ. 4, Heb. i. 7. Satan disdains to submit, since the angels (as he says) are necessarily immortal, and cannot be destroyed, and since, too, they are now improved in experience, and may hope to carry on the war more successfully, notwithstanding the present triumph of their adversary in Heaven.—*Newton.*

Or do his errands in the gloomy deep,
What can it then avail, though yet we feel
Strength undiminished, or eternal being
To undergo eternal punishment?"
Whereto with speedy words the arch fiend replied.
"Fall'n cherub, to be weak is miserable
Doing or suffering: but of this be sure,
To do aught good never will be our task,
But ever to do ill our sole delight,
As being the contrary to his high will
Whom we resist. If then his providence
Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
Our labour must be to pervert that end,
And out of good still to find means of evil;
Which oft-times may succeed, so as perhaps
Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb
His inmost counsels from their destined aim.
But see! the angry Victor hath recalled
His ministers of vengeance[1] and pursuit
Back to the gates of heaven: the sulphurous hail

[1] Dr. Bentley has really made a very material objection to this and some other passages of the poem, wherein the good angels are represented as pursuing the rebel host with fire and thunderbolts down through Chaos even to the gates of Hell; as being contrary to the account which the angel Raphael gives to Adam in the Sixth Book. And it is certain that there the good angels are ordered to "stand still only and behold," and the Messiah alone expels them out of Heaven; and after he has expelled them, and Hell has closed upon them, vi. 880—

> "Sole victor from the expulsion of his foes,
> Messiah his triumphal chariot turned:
> To meet him all his saints, who silent stood
> Eye-witnesses of his almighty acts,
> With jubilee advanced."

These accounts are plainly contrary the one to the other; but the author does not therefore contradict himself, nor is one part of his scheme inconsistent with another. For it should be considered, who are the persons that give these different accounts. In Book vi., the angel Raphael is the speaker, and therefore his account may be depended upon as the genuine and exact truth of the matter. But in the other passages Satan himself or some of his angels are the speakers; and they were too proud and obstinate ever to acknowledge the Messiah for their conqueror; as their rebellion was raised on his account, they would never own his superiority; they would rather ascribe their defeat to the whole host of Heaven than to *him alone*; or if they did indeed imagine their pursuers to be so many

Shot after us in storm, o'erblown hath laid
The fiery surge, that from the precipice
Of Heaven received us falling; and the thunder,
Winged with red lightning and impetuous rage,
Perhaps has spent his shafts, and ceases now
To bellow through the vast and boundless deep.
Let us not slip the occasion, whether scorn
Or satiate fury yield it from our foe.
Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild,
The seat of desolation, void of light,
Save what the glimmering of these livid flames
Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend
From off the tossing of these fiery waves,
There rest, if any rest can harbour there,
And re-assembling our afflicted powers,
Consult how we may henceforth most offend
Our enemy; our own loss how repair;
How overcome this dire calamity;
What reinforcement we may gain from hope,
If not, what resolution from despair."
Thus Satan, talking to his nearest mate,
With head up-lift above the wave, and eyes
That sparkling blazed; his other parts besides
Prone on the flood, extended long and large,
Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge
As whom the fables name of monstrous size,
Titanian, or earth-born, that warred on Jove,
Briareos, or Typhon, whom the den

in number, their fears multiplied them, and it serves admirably to express how much they were terrified and confounded. In Book vi., 830, the noise of his chariot is compared to the "sound of a numerous host;" and perhaps they might think that a numerous host were really pursuing. In one place, indeed, we have Chaos speaking thus, ii. 998—

"and Heaven gates
Poured out by millions her victorious bands
Pursuing."

But what a condition was Chaos in during the fall of the rebel angels? See vi. 871—

"Nine days they fell; confounded Chaos roared,
And felt tenfold confusion in their fall
Through his wild anarchy, so huge a rout
Incumbered him with ruin."

We must suppose him therefore to speak according to his own frighted and disturbed imagination.—*Newton.*

By ancient Tarsus held,[1] or that sea-beast
Leviathan,[2] which God of all his works
Created hugest that swim the ocean stream:
Him, haply slumbering on the Norway foam,
The pilot of some small night-foundered[3] skiff
Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,
With fixéd anchor in his scaly rind
Moors by his side under the lee, while night
Invests the sea, and wishéd morn delays:
So stretched out huge in length the arch-fiend lay,
Chained on the burning lake, nor ever thence
Had risen or heaved his head, but that the will
And high permission of all-ruling Heaven
Left him at large to his own dark designs,
That with reiterated crimes he might
Heap on himself damnation, while he sought
Evil to others, and enraged might see
How all his malice served but to bring forth
Infinite goodness, grace and mercy shown
On man by him seduced; but on himself
Treble confusion, wrath and vengeance poured.
Forthwith upright he rears, from off the pool,
His mighty nature; on each hand the flames,
Driven backward, slope their pointing spires, and rolled
In billows, leave i' the midst a horrid vale.
Then with expanded wings he steers his flight
Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air[4]

[1] Typhon is the same with Typhoëus. That the den of Typhoëus was in Cilicia, of which Tarsus was a celebrated city, we are told by Pindar and Pomponius Mela.

[2] Milton seems to regard the leviathan as identical with the whale. The various and conflicting opinions on the subject are well detailed by Barnes on Job, xli. 1. General conclusion seems in favour of the crocodile. As far as Milton is concerned, I think he had in mind the stories of the kraken, or some other gigantic species of cuttle-fish, which have been said to appear in the Norwegian seas. The reader will call to mind the similar story in "Sinbad the Sailor." See *Lane's Arabian Nights*.

[3] *i. e.* overtaken by night, and thereby hindered from proceeding.

[4] This conceit of the "air's feeling unusual weight" is borrowed from Spenser, who, speaking of the old dragon, says, b. i. cant. ii. st. 18—

> "Then with his waving wings displayéd wide,
> Himself up high he lifted from the ground,
> And with strong flight did forcibly divide
> The yielding air, which nigh too feeble found
> Her flitting parts, and element unsound,
> To bear so great a weight." *Thyer.*

That felt unusual weight, till on dry land
He lights, if it were land that ever burned
With solid, as the lake with liquid fire;
And such appeared in hue, as when the force
Of subterranean wind[1] transports a hill
Torn from Pelorus,[2] or the shattered side
Of thundering Etna, whose combustible
And fuel'd entrails thence conceiving fire,
Sublimed with mineral fury, aid the winds,
And leave a singéd bottom all involved
With stench and smoke: such resting found the sole
Of unblest feet. Him followed his next mate,
Both glorying to have 'scaped the Stygian flood
As gods, and by their own recovered strength,
Not by the sufferance of supernal power.
"Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,"
Said then the lost archangel, "this the seat
That we must change for Heaven, this mournful gloom
For that celestial light? Be it so, since he
Who now is Sovran[3] can dispose and bid
What shall be right: farthest from him is best,
Whom reason hath equalled, force hath made supreme
Above his equals. Farewell happy fields
Where joy for ever dwells! Hail horrors, hail
Infernal world, and thou profoundest Hell
Receive thy new possessor; one who brings
A mind not to be changed by place or time.
The mind is its own place,[4] and in itself
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.
What matter where, if I be still the same,
And what I should be, all but[5] less than he
Whom thunder hath made greater? Here at least
We shall be free; the Almighty hath not built
Here for his envy, will not drive us hence:
Here we may reign secure, and in my choice
To reign is worth ambition though in Hell:

[1] Rather read "winds," with Pearce.

[2] The Cape di Faro, a promontory of Sicily, about a mile and a half from Italy.—See *Virg. Æn.* iii. 6 and 7.

[3] So Milton rightly spells it, according to its derivation from the Italian *sovrano*.

[4] These are some of the Stoical extravagances, placed by Milton in the mouth of Satan, by way of ridicule.

[5] Some read "albeit."

Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven
But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,
The associates and copartners of our loss,
Lie thus astonished on the oblivious pool,
And call them not to share with us their part
In this unhappy mansion, or once more,
With rallied arms, to try what may be yet
Regained in Heaven, or what more lost in Hell?"
So Satan spake, and him Beëlzebub
Thus answered. "Leader of those armies bright.
Which but the Omnipotent none could have foiled.
If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge
Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft
In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge[1]
Of battle when it raged, in all assaults
Their surest signal, they will soon resume
New courage and revive, though now they lie
Grovelling and prostrate on yon lake of fire,
As we erewhile, astounded and amazed:
No wonder, fallen such a pernicious height."
He scarce had ceased when the superior fiend
Was moving toward the shore; his ponderous shield,
Ethereal temper, massy, large, and round,
Behind him cast; the broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb
Through optic glass[2] the Tuscan artist views
At evening from the top of Fesolé,

[1] From the Latin *acies*, which signifies both the *edge* of a weapon and an army drawn up in battle array. Or we may, with Newton, compare 2 Henry IV. act i.—

"You knew, he walked o'er perils, on an edge
More likely to fall in than to get o'er."

And 1 Henry IV. act i.—

"I'll read you matter, deep and dangerous;
As full of peril and adventurous spirit,
As to o'erwalk a current, roaring loud,
On the unstedfast footing of a spear.
Hot. If he fall in, good night, or sink or swim."

[2] The shield of Satan was large as the moon seen through a telescope, an instrument first applied to celestial observations by Galileo, a native of Tuscany, whom he means here by "the Tuscan artist," and afterwards mentions by name in v. 262; a testimony of his honour for so great a man, whom he had known and visited in Italy, as himself informs us in his "Areopagitica."—*Newton.*

Or in Valdarno,[1] to descry new lands,
Rivers, or mountains in her spotty globe.
His spear, to equal which the tallest pine
Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast[2]
Of some great ammiral,[3] were but a wand,
He walked with to support uneasy steps
Over the burning marl, not like those steps
On Heaven's azure, and the torrid clime
Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with fire;
Nathless he so endured, till on the beach
Of that inflamed sea he stood, and called
His legions, angel forms, who lay entranced
Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks
In Vallombrosa,[4] where the Etrurian shades
High over-arched imbower; or scattered sedge
Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion[5] armed
Hath vexed the Red Sea coast, whose waves o'erthrew
Busiris[6] and his Memphian chivalry,[7]

[1] *i. e.* the valley of the Arno, in Tuscany.

[2] "These sons of Mavors bore (instead of spears),
Two knotty masts which none but they could lift."
Fairfax's Tasso, vi. 40.

[3] According to its German extraction, *amiral*, or *amirael*, says Hume; from the Italian *ammiraglio*, says Richardson, more probably. Our author made choice of this, as thinking it of a better sound than admiral: and in Latin he writes, *ammiralatus curia*, the court of admiralty.

[4] A valley of Tuscany, remarkable for its cool and delightful shades.

[5] Orion is a constellation represented in the figure of an armed man, and supposed to be attended with stormy weather, *assurgens fluctu nimbosus Orion*, Virg. Æn. i. 539. And the Red Sea abounds so much with sedge, that in the Hebrew Scripture it is called the Sedgy Sea. And he says "hath vexed the Red Sea coast" particularly, because the wind usually drives the sedge in great quantities towards the shore.—*Newton.*

[6] There is no *historical* authority for making Pharaoh Busiris; but Milton was at liberty to borrow a common tradition respecting that king, and adapt it to his verse.

[7] Chivalry (from the French *chevalerie*) signifies not only knighthood, but those who use horses in fight, both such as ride on horses and such as ride in chariots drawn by them. In the sense of riding and fighting on horseback this word chivalry is used in verse 765, and in many places of Fairfax's Tasso, as in Cant. 5, st. 9. Cant. 8. st. 67. Cant. 20. st. 61. In the sense of riding and fighting in chariots drawn by horses, Milton uses the word chivalry in Parad. Reg. iii. ver. 348. compared with ver. 328.—*Hearne.*

While with perfidious hatred[1] they pursued
The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld
From the safe shore their floating carcasses
And broken chariot wheels: so thick bestrown,
Abject and lost, lay these, covering the flood,
Under amazement of their hideous change.
He called so loud, that all the hollow deep
Of Hell resounded. "Princes, potentates,
Warriors, the flower of Heaven, once yours, now lost,
If such astonishment as this can seize
Eternal spirits; or have ye chosen this place
After the toil of battle to repose
Your wearied virtue, for the ease ye find
To slumber here, as in the vales of Heaven?
Or in this abject posture have ye sworn
To adore the Conqueror? who now beholds
Cherub and seraph rolling in the flood
With scattered arms and ensigns, till anon
His swift pursuers from Heaven gates discern
The advantage, and descending tread us down
Thus drooping, or with linkèd thunderbolts
Transfix us to the bottom of this gulf.
Awake, arise, or be for ever fallen!"
They heard, and were abashed, and up they sprung
Upon the wing, as when men, wont to watch
On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,
Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.
Nor did they not perceive the evil plight
In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel,
Yet to their general's voice they soon obeyed
Innumerable. As when the potent rod
Of Amram's son,[2] in Egypt's evil day,
Waved round the coast, up called a pitchy cloud
Of locusts, warping[3] on the eastern wind,
That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung
Like night, and darkened all the land of Nile:
So numberless were those bad angels seen
Hovering on wing under the cope of Hell
'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires;

[1] Because Pharaoh, after leave given to the Israelites to depart, followed after them like fugitives.—*Hume.*
[2] See Exod. x. 13, sqq.
[3] Working themselves forward: a sea phrase.

Till, at a signal given, the uplifted spear
Of their great sultan waving to direct
Their course, in even balance down they light
On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain;
A multitude, like which the populous north [1]
Poured never from her frozen loins, to pass
Rhene or the Danaw, when her barbarous sons
Came like a deluge on the south, and spread
Beneath Gibraltar to the Lybian sands.
Forthwith from every squadron and each band
The heads and leaders thither haste where stood
Their great commander; godlike shapes and forms
Excelling human, princely dignities,
And powers that erst in Heaven sat on thrones;
Though of their names in heavenly records now
Be no memorial, blotted out and rased
By their rebellion from the books of life
Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve
Got them new names, till wandering o'er the earth,
Through God's high sufferance, for the trial of man,
By falsities and lies the greatest part

[1] This comparison does not fall below the rest, as some have imagined. They were thick as the leaves, and numberless as the locusts, but such a multitude the north never poured forth; and we may observe that the subject of this comparison rises very much above the others, leaves and locusts. The populous north, as the northern parts of the world are observed to be more fruitful of people than the hotter countries: Sir William Temple calls it "the northern hive." "Poured never," a very proper word to express the inundations of these northern nations. "From her frozen loins;" it is the Scripture expression of children and descendants "coming out of the loins," as Gen. xxv. 11, "Kings shall come out of thy loins;" and these are called *frozen loins* only on account of the coldness of the climate. "To pass Rhene or the Danaw." He might have said, consistently with his verse, The Rhine or Danube, but he chose the more uncommon names, Rhene, of the Latin, and Danaw, of the German, both which words are used too in Spenser. "When her barbarous sons," &c. They were truly barbarous; for besides exercising several cruelties, they destroyed all the monuments of learning and politeness wherever they came. "Came like a deluge." Spenser, describing the same people, has the same simile. Faërie Queen, B. ii. cant. 1, st. 15.

> "And overflowed all countries far away,
> Like Noye's great flood, with their importune sway."

They were the Goths, and Huns, and Vandals, who overran all the southern provinces of Europe.—*Newton.*

Of mankind they corrupted to forsake
God their Creator, and the invisible
Glory of him that made them to transform
Oft to the image of a brute, adorned
With gay religions full of pomp and gold,
And devils to adore for deities;
Then were they known to men by various names,
And various idols through the heathen world.
Say, Muse, their names then known, who first, who last,
Roused from the slumber, on that fiery couch,
At their great emperor's call, as next in worth
Came singly where he stood on the bare strand,
While the promiscuous crowd stood yet aloof.
The chief were those who from the pit of Hell,
Roaming to seek their prey on earth, durst fix
Their seats long after next the seat of God,
Their altars by his altar, God's adored
Among the nations round, and durst abide
Jehovah thundering out of Sion, throned
Between the cherubim;[1] yea, often placed
Within his sanctuary itself their shrines,[2]
Abominations; and with cursed things
His holy rites and solemn feasts profaned,
And with their darkness durst affront his light.
First Moloch,[3] horrid king besmeared with blood

[1] The ark of the covenant was placed between the golden cherubim. Compare 2 Kings xix. 15, "O Lord God of Israel, which dwellest between the cherubim."

[2] See 2 Kings xxi. 4; Jer. vii. 30; Ezek. vii. 20, viii. 5, sq.

[3] The name Moloch signifies king, and he is called "horrid" king, because of the human sacrifices which were made to him This idol is supposed by some to be the same as Saturn, to whom the heathens (especially the Carthaginians, See Porphyr. de Abstin. ii. 27.) sacrificed their children, and by others to be the sun. When it is said in Scripture that the children "passed through the fire to Moloch," we must not understand that they always actually burnt their children in honour of this idol, but sometimes made them only leap over the flames, or pass nimbly between two fires, to purify them by that lustration, and consecrate them to this false deity. He was the god of the Ammonites, and is called "the abomination of the children of Ammon," 1 Kings xi. 7, and was worshipped in Rabba, their capital city, which David conquered. This Rabba being called the "city of waters," 2 Sam. xi. 27, it is here said, "Rabba and her watery plain;" and, likewise, "in Argob and in Basan," neighbouring countries to Rabba, and subject to the Ammonites, as far as "to the stream of utmost Arnon," which river was the boundary of their country on the south.—*Newton.*

Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears,
Though for the noise of drums and timbrels loud
Their children's cries unheard, that passed through fire
To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite
Worshipped in Rabba and her watery plain,
In Argob and in Basan, to the stream
Of utmost Arnon. Nor content with such
Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart
Of Solomon he led by fraud to build
His temple right against the temple of God
On that opprobrious hill,[1] and made his grove
The pleasant valley of Hinnom, Tophet thence
And black Gehenna called, the type of Hell.
Next Chemos,[2] the obscene dread of Moab's sons
From Aroar to Nebo, and the wild
Of southmost Abarim; in Hesebon
And Horonaim, Seon's realm, beyond
The flowery dale of Sibma clad with vines,
And Eleälé to the Asphaltic pool.
Peor his other name, when he enticed
Israel in Sittim on their march from Nile
To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe
Yet thence his lustful orgies he enlarged
Even to that hill of scandal,[3] by the grove
Of Moloch homicide, lust hard by hate;
Till good Josiah[4] drove them thence to Hell.
With these came they, who from the bordering flood

[1] Solomon built a temple to Moloch on the Mount of Olives (1 Kings xi. 7), therefore called "that opprobrious hill;" and high places and sacrifices were made to him "in the pleasant valley of Hinnom," Jer. vii. 31, which lay south-east of Jerusalem, and was called likewise Tophet, from the Hebrew, *toph*, a drum; drums and such like noisy instruments being used to drown the cries of the miserable children who were offered to this idol; and Gehenna, or "the valley of Hinnom," is in several places of the New Testament, and by our Saviour himself, made the name and type of Hell, by reason of the fire that was kept up there to Moloch, and of the horrid groans and outcries of human sacrifices.—*Newton.*

[2] God of the Moabites, 1 Kings xi. 7.

[3] His high places were adjoining to those of Moloch, on the Mount of Olives, therefore called here "that hill of scandal," as before "that opprobrious hill," for "Solomon did build an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Moloch, the abomination of the children of Ammon," 1 Kings xi. 7.

[4] 2 Kings xxiii. 13, 20.

Of old[1] Euphrates to the brook that parts
Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names
Of Baälim and Ashtaroth,[2] those male,
These feminine. For spirits when they please
Can either sex assume, or both; so soft
And uncompounded is their essence pure,
Not tied or manacled with joint or limb,
Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,
Like cumbrous flesh; but in what shape they choose,
Dilated or condensed, bright or obscure,
Can execute their airy purposes,
And works of love or enmity fulfil.
For those the race of Israel oft forsook
Their living strength, and unfrequented left
His righteous altar, bowing lowly down
To bestial gods; for which their heads as low
Bowed down in battle, sunk before the spear
Of despicable foes. With these in troop
Came Astoreth,[3] whom the Phœnicians called
Astarte, Queen of Heaven, with crescent horns;
To whose bright image nightly by the moon
Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs,
In Sion also not unsung, where stood
Her temple on the offensive mountain, built
By that uxorious king, whose heart, though large,
Beguiled by fair idolatresses, fell
To idols foul. Thammuz[4] came next behind,

[1] Because this river is mentioned in the earliest records of time.—See Gen. ii. 14.

[2] Probably the sun and the "host of heaven."

[3] The goddess of the Phœnicians, and the moon was adored under this name. She is rightly said to "come in troop" with Ashtaroth, as she was one of them, the moon with the stars. Sometimes she is called "queen of heaven," Jer. vii. 18, and xliv. 17, 18. She is likewise called "the goddess of the Zidonians," 1 Kings xi. 5, "and the abomination of the Zidonians," 2 Kings xxiii. 13., as she was worshipped very much in Zidon or Sidon, a famous city of the Phœnicians, situated upon the Mediterranean.—*Newton.*

[4] The account of Thammuz is finely romantic, and suitable to what we read among the ancients of the worship which was paid to that idol. Maundrell gives the following account of this ancient piece of worship, and probably the first occasion of such a superstition. "We came to a fair large river—doubtless the ancient river Adonis, so famous for the idolatrous rites performed here in lamentation of Adonis. We had the fortune to see what may be supposed to be the occasion of that opinion which Lucian relates, viz., that this stream, at certain

Whose annual wound in Lebanon allured
The Syrian damsels to lament his fate
In amorous ditties all a summer's day,
While smooth Adonis from his native rock
Ran purple to the sea, supposed with blood
Of Thammuz yearly wounded: the love-tale
Infected Sion's daughters with like heat,
Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch
Ezekiel [1] saw, when by the vision led
His eye surveyed the dark idolatries
Of alienated Judah. Next came one
Who mourned in earnest, when the captive ark
Maimed his brute image head and hands lopped off
In his own temple, on the grunsel edge,[2]
Where he fell flat, and shamed his worshippers:
Dagon his name, sea-monster, upward man
And downward fish: [3] yet had his temple high
Reared in Azotus dreaded through the coast
Of Palestine in Gath and Ascalon,
And Accaron and Gaza's frontier bounds.
Him followed Rimmon,[4] whose delightful seat
Was fair Damascus, on the fertile banks
Of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid streams.
He also 'gainst the house of God was bold:

seasons of the year, especially about the feast of Adonis, is of a bloody colour, which the heathens looked upon as proceeding from a kind of sympathy in the river for the death of Adonis, who was killed by a wild boar in the mountains, out of which this stream rises. Something like this we saw actually come to pass; for the water was stained to a surprising redness; and as we observed in travelling, had discoloured the sea a great way into a reddish hue, occasioned, doubtless, by a sort of minium, or red earth, washed into the river by the violence of the rain, and not by any stain from Adonis's blood."—*Addison.*

Thammuz was the god of the Syrians, the same with Adonis, who, according to the traditions, died every year and revived again. He was slain by a wild boar in Mount Lebanon, from whence the river Adonis descends; and when this river began to be of a reddish hue, as it did at a certain season of the year, this was their signal for celebrating their Adonia, or feasts of Adonis, and the women made loud lamentations for him, supposing the river was discoloured with his blood.—*Newton.*

[1] See Ezek. viii. 13, sq.

[2] *i. e.* the threshold. See 1 Sam. v. 4.

[3] See Layard's Nineveh, vol. ii. p. 467, *note;* and Calmet, p. 235, of my edition.

[4] Rimmon was a god of the Syrians.

A leper once he lost,[1] and gained a king,
Ahaz his sottish conqueror, whom he drew
God's altar to disparage and displace
For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn
His odious offerings, and adore the gods
Whom he had vanquished. After these appeared
A crew who, under names of old renown,
Osiris, Isis, Orus, and their train,
With monstrous shapes and sorceries abused
Fanatic Egypt and her priests, to seek
Their wandering gods disguised in brutish forms
Rather than human. Nor did Israel 'scape
The infection, when their borrowed gold composed
The calf in Oreb; and the rebel king
Doubled that sin in Bethel and in Dan,[2]
Likening his Maker to the grazéd ox;
Jehovah, who in one night when he passed
From Egypt marching, equalled with one stroke
Both her first-born and all her bleating gods.[3]
Belial came last, than whom a spirit more lewd
Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love
Vice for itself: to him no temple stood
Or altar smoked; yet who more oft than he
In temples and at altars, when the priest
Turns atheist, as did Eli's sons, who filled
With lust and violence the house of God?
In courts and palaces he also reigns
And in luxurious cities, where the noise
Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers,
And injury and outrage: and when night
Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons

[1] Naaman, who, on account of his cure, resolved henceforth to "offer neither burnt-offering nor sacrifice to any other god, but unto the Lord," 2 Kings v. 17.

[2] Great, however, as was the sin of the Israelites in setting up these calves, it has been well observed by Dean Graves (on the Pentateuch) part iii. lect. ii., that "such relapses into idolatry never implied a rejection of Jehovah as their God, or of the Mosaic law, as if they doubted its truth. The Jewish idolatry consisted, first, in worshipping the true God by symbols; but, in every one of these instances, far from rejecting Jehovah as their God, the images, symbols, and rites employed were designed to honour him, by imitating the manner in which the most distinguished nations the Jews were acquainted with worshipped their divinities."

[3] Alluding to the worship of Ammon under the form of a ram.

Of Belial,[1] flown[2] with insolence and wine.
Witness the streets of Sodom, and that night
In Gibeah, when the hospitable door
Exposed a matron[3] to avoid worse rape.
These were the prime in order and in might;
The rest were long to tell, though far renowned,
The Ionian gods,[4] of Javan's issue; held
Gods, yet confessed later than Heaven and Earth,
Their boasted parents; Titan, Heaven's first-born,
With his enormous brood, and birthright seized
By younger Saturn; he from mightier Jove,
His own and Rhea's son, like measure found;
So Jove usurping reigned; these first in Crete
And Ida known, thence on the snowy top
Of cold Olympus ruled the middle air,
Their highest Heaven; or on the Delphian cliff,
Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds
Of Doric land; or who with Saturn old
Fled over Adria to the Hesperian fields,
And o'er the Celtic roamed the utmost isles.
All these and more came flocking; but with looks
Downcast and damp, yet such wherein appeared
Obscure some glimpse of joy, to have found their chief

[1] See Calmet, p. 141, of my edition.

[2] *i. e.* heightened, excited.

[3] Gen. xix. 8.

[4] Javan, the fourth son of Japhet, is supposed to have settled in the south-west part of Asia Minor, about Ionia, which contains the radical letters of his name. His descendants were the Ionians and Grecians; and the principal of their gods were Heaven and Earth. Titan was their eldest son; he was father of the giants, and his empire was seized by his younger brother Saturn, as Saturn's was by Jupiter, son of Saturn and Rhea. These first were known in the island Crete, now Candia, in which is Mount Ida, where Jupiter is said to have been born; thence passed over into Greece, and resided on Mount Olympus, in Thessaly; "the snowy top of cold Olympus," as Homer calls it, which mountain afterwards became the name of Heaven among their worshippers; "or on the Delphian cliff," Parnassus, whereon was seated the city Delphi, famous for the temple and oracle of Apollo; "or in Dodona," a city and wood adjoining, sacred to Jupiter; "and through all the bounds of Doric land," that is, of Greece, Doris being a part of Greece; "or fled over Adria," the Adriatic, "to the Hesperian fields," to Italy; "and o'er the Celtic," France and the other countries overrun by the Celtes, "roamed the utmost isles," Great Britain, Ireland, the Orkneys, Thule, or Iceland, "Ultima Thule," as it is called, the utmost boundary of the world.—*Newton.*

Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost
In loss itself; which on his countenance cast
Like doubtful hue; but he his wonted pride
Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore
Semblance of worth not substance, gently raised
Their fainting courage, and dispelled their fears.
Then straight commands that at the warlike sound
Of trumpets loud and clarions[1] be upreared
His mighty standard; that proud honour claimed
Azazel,[2] as his right, a cherub tall,
Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurled
The imperial ensign, which, full high advanced,
Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,
With gems and golden lustre rich emblazed,
Seraphic arms and trophies; all the while
Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds;
At which the universal host up sent
A shout, that tore Hell's concave, and beyond
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.
All in a moment through the gloom were seen
Ten thousand banners rise into the air
With orient colours waving; with them rose
A forest huge of spears,[3] and thronging helms
Appeared, and serried[4] shields in thick array
Of depth immeasurable; anon they move
In perfect phalanx to the Dorian[5] mood
Of flutes and soft recorders; such as raised
To height of noblest temper heroes old
Arming to battle, and instead of rage
Deliberate valour breathed, firm and unmoved
With dread of death to flight or foul retreat;
Nor wanting power to mitigate and 'suage
With solemn touches troubled thoughts, and chase
Anguish and doubt, and fear, and sorrow, and pain,

[1] Small, shrill, treble trumpets.
[2] Not the scapegoat, but some demon.
[3] So Tasso, describing the Christian and Pagan armies preparing to engage, Cant. 20, st. 28.

"Of dry-topped oaks they seemed two forests thick;
So did each host with spears and pikes abound."
Fairfax. Thyer.

[4] *i. e.* locked closely together.
[5] *i. e.* grave or serious, such being the characteristic of Dorian harmony.

From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they,
Breathing united force, with fixéd thought,
Moved on in silence to soft pipes, that charmed
Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil; and now
Advanced in view they stand, a horrid front
Of dreadful length and dazzling arms, in guise
Of warriors old with ordered spear and shield,
Awaiting what command their mighty chief
Had to impose. He through the armed files
Darts his experienced eye, and soon traverse
The whole battalion views, their order due,
Their visages and stature as of gods;
Their number last he sums. And now his heart
Distends with pride, and hardening in his strength
Glories; for never since created man,
Met such embodied force, as, named with these,
Could merit more than that small infantry
Warred on by cranes;[1] though all the giant brood

[1] All the heroes and armies that ever were assembled were no more than pigmies in comparison with these angels; "though all the giant brood of Phlegra," a city of Macedonia, where the giants fought with the gods, "with the heroic race were joined that fought at Thebes," a city of Bœotia, famous for the war between the sons of Œdipus, celebrated by Statius in his Thebaid, "and Ilium," made still more famous by Homer's Iliad, where "on each side" the heroes were assisted by the gods, therefore called "auxiliar gods; and what resounds" even "in fable or romance of Uther's son," king Arthur, son of Uther Pendragon, whose exploits are romantically extolled by Geoffry of Monmouth, "begirt with British and Armoric knights," for he was often in alliance with the king of Armorica, since called Bretagne, of the Britons who settled there; "and all who since ousted in Aspramont, or Montalban," romantic names of places mentioned in Orlando Furioso, the latter, perhaps, Montauban in France, "Damasco or Marocco," Damascus or Morocco, but he calls them as they are called in romances; "or Trebisond," a city of Cappadocia, in the Lesser Asia; all these places are famous in romances, for joustings between the "baptized and infidels; or whom Biserta," formerly called Utica, "sent from Afric shore," that is, the Saracens who passed from Biserta, in Africa, to Spain, "when Charlemagne with all his peerage fell by Fontarabia," Charlemagne, king of France and emperor of Germany, about the year 800, undertook a war against the Saracens in Spain; and Mariana and the Spanish historians are Milton's authors for saying that he and his army were routed in this manner at Fontarabia (which is a strong town in Biscay at the very entrance into Spain, and esteemed the key of the kingdom); but Mezeray and the French writers give a quite different and more probable account of him, that he was at last victorious over his enemies and died in peace.—*Newton.*

Of Phlegra with the heroic race were joined
That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side
Mixed with auxiliar gods; and what resounds
In fable or romance of Uther's son
Begirt with British and Armoric knights,
And all who since, baptized or infidel,
Jousted in Aspramont or Montalban,
Damasco, or Marocco, or Trebisond,
Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore,
When Charlemagne with all his peerage fell
By Fontarabia. Thus far these beyond
Compare of mortal prowess, yet observed
Their dread commander; he above the rest
In shape and gesture proudly eminent
Stood like a tower; his form had yet not lost
All its original brightness, nor appeared
Less than archangel ruined, and the excess
Of glory obscured; as when the sun new risen
Looks through the horizontal misty air
Shorn of his beams, or from behind the moon
In dim eclipse disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs. Darkened so, yet shone
Above them all the archangel; but his face
Deep scars of thunder had entrenched, and care
Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows
Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride
Waiting revenge; cruel his eyes, but cast
Signs of remorse and passion to behold
The fellows of his crime, the followers rather
(Far other once beheld in bliss) condemned
For ever now to have their lot in pain,
Millions of spirits for his fault amerced[1]
Of Heaven, and from eternal splendours flung
For his revolt; yet faithful how they stood,
Their glory withered: as when Heaven's fire
Hath scathed[2] the forest oaks, or mountain pines,
With singéd top their stately growth, though bare,
Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepared
To speak; whereat their doubled ranks they bend
From wing to wing, and half enclose him round

[1] Deprived, robbed of, taken away from.
[2] Hurt, injured.

With all his peers: attention held them mute.
Thrice he assayed, and thrice, in spite of scorn,
Tears, such as angels weep,[1] burst forth: at last
Words interwove with sighs found out their way.
"O myriads of immortal spirits! O powers
Matchless but with the Almighty; and that strife
Was not inglorious, though the event was dire,
As this place testifies, and this dire change,
Hateful to utter: but what power of mind
Foreseeing or presaging, from the depth
Of knowledge past or present, could have feared,
How such united force of gods, how such
As stood like these, could ever know repulse?
For who can yet believe, though after loss,
That all these puissant legions, whose exile
Hath emptied Heaven,[2] shall fail to reascend
Self-raised, and repossess their native seat?
For me be witness all the host of Heaven,
If counsels different, or danger shunned
By me, have lost our hopes. But He who reigns
Monarch in Heaven, till then as one secure
Sat on his throne, upheld by old repute,
Consent or custom, and his regal state
Put forth at full, but still his strength concealed,
Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.
Henceforth his might we know, and know our own,
So as not either to provoke, or dread
New war, provoked; our better part remains
To work in close design, by fraud or guile,
What force effected not: that he no less
At length from us may find, who overcomes

[1] "Tears, such as angels weep," like Homer's ichor of the gods, which was different from the blood of mortals. This weeping of Satan on surveying his numerous host, and the thoughts of their wretched state, puts one in mind of the story of Xerxes weeping on seeing his vast army, and reflecting that they were mortal, at the time that he was hastening them to their fate, and to the intended destruction of the greatest people in the world, to gratify his own vain glory.—*Newton.*

[2] It is conceived that a third part of the angels fell with Satan, according to Rev. xii. 4.: "And his tail drew the third part of the stars of Heaven, and cast them to the earth;" and this opinion Milton has expressed in several places, ii. 692, v. 710, vi. 156; but Satan here talks big and magnifies their number, as if their "exile had emptied Heaven."

By force, hath overcome but half his foe.
Space may produce new worlds; whereof to rise
There went a fame in Heaven that he ere long
Intended to create, and therein plant
A generation, whom his choice regard
Should favour equal to the sons of Heaven:
Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps
Our first eruption: thither or elsewhere;
For this infernal pit shall never hold
Celestial spirits in bondage, nor the abyss
Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts
Full counsel must mature: peace is despaired,
For who can think submission? War, then, war,
Open or understood, must be resolved."
He spake; and to confirm his words, out flew
Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
Of mighty cherubim; the sudden blaze
Far round illumined Hell: highly they raged
Against the highest, and fierce with graspéd arms[1]
Clashed on their sounding shields the din of war,
Hurling defiance toward the vault of Heaven.
There stood a hill not far, whose grisly top
Belched fire and rolling smoke; the rest entire
Shone with a glossy scurf, undoubted sign
That in his womb[2] was hid metallic ore,
The work of sulphur.[3] Thither, winged with speed,
A numerous brigade hastened: as when bands
Of pioneers with spade and pickaxe armed
Forerun the royal camp, to trench a field,
Or cast a rampart. Mammon[4] led them on,

[1] The known custom of the Roman soldiers, when they applauded a speech of their general, was to smite their shields with their swords.—*Bentley.*

[2] This word is constantly used in the masculine gender by Chaucer.

[3] For metals are supposed to consist of two essential parts or principles; mercury, as the basis or metallic matter; and sulphur as the binder or cement, which fixes the fluid mercury into a coherent malleable mass. And so Ben Jonson in the "Alchemist," act. ii. scene 3.:—

"It turns to sulphur, or to quicksilver,
Who are the parents of all other metals."—*Newton.*

[4] This name is Syriac, and signifies riches. "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon," says our Saviour, Matt. vi. 24. and bids us "make to ourselves friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness," Luke xvi. 9.—*Newton.*

Mammon, the least erected spirit that fell
From Heaven, for even in Heaven his looks and thoughts
Were always downward bent, admiring more
The richest of Heaven's pavement, trodden gold,
Than aught divine or holy else enjoyed
In vision beatific: by him first
Men also, and by his suggestion taught,
Ransacked the centre, and with impious hands
Rifled the bowels of their mother earth
For treasures better hid. Soon had his crew
Opened into the hill a spacious wound,
And digged out ribs of gold. Let none admire
That riches grow in Hell; that soil may best
Deserve the precious bane. And here let those
Who boast in mortal things, and wondering tell
Of Babel and the works of Memphian kings,
Learn how their greatest monuments of fame
And strength and art are easily outdone
By spirits reprobate, and in an hour
What in an age they with incessant toil
And hands innumerable[1] scarce perform.
Nigh on the plain in many cells prepared,
That underneath had veins of liquid fire
Sluced from the lake, a second multitude
With wondrous art founded the massy ore,
Severing each kind, and scummed the bullion dross:[2]
A third as soon had formed within the ground
A various mould, and from the boiling cells
By strange conveyance filled each hollow nook,
As in an organ[3] from one blast of wind
To many a row of pipes the sound-board breathes
Anon out of the earth a fabric huge
Rose like an exhalation, with the sound
Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet,
Built like a temple, where pilasters round
Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid

[1] There were 360,000 men employed for nearly twenty years upon a single pyramid.

[2] *Bullion* is here an adjective. The sense is: "they *founded* or *melted* the *ore* that was in the *mass*, by separating or *severing* each kind, that is, the sulphur, earth, &c., from the metal; and after that they *scummed* the *dross* that floated on the top of the burning ore."—*Pearce.*

[3] On which instrument Milton was himself a performer.

With golden architrave; nor did there want
Cornice or frieze, with bossy sculptures graven;
The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon,
Nor great Alcairo [1] such magnificence
Equalled in all their glories, to inshrine
Belus or Serapis [2] their gods, or seat
Their kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove
In wealth and luxury. The ascending pile
Stood fixed her stately height, and straight the doors
Opening their brazen folds discover wide
Within, her ample spaces, o'er the smooth
And level pavement: from the arched roof
Pendent by subtle magic many a row
Of starry lamps and blazing cressets [3] fed
With naphtha and asphaltus yielded light
As from a sky. The hasty multitude
Admiring entered; and the work some praise,
And some the architect: his hand was known
In Heaven by many a towered structure high,
Where sceptred angels held their residence,
And sat as princes, whom the Supreme King
Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,
Each in his hierarchy, the orders bright.
Nor was his name unheard or unadored
In ancient Greece; and in Ausonian land
Men called him Mulciber; and how he fell [4]

[1] This introduction of a modern name is rather clumsy.

[2] Belus the son of Nimrod, second king of Babylon, and the first man worshipped for a god, by the Chaldæans styled Bel, by the Phœnicians, Baal. Serapis, the same with Apis, the god of the Egyptians.—*Hume.*

[3] A cresset is any great blazing light, as a beacon. So Shakspeare. 1 Hen. IV. act. iii.:—

> " at my nativity
> The front of Heaven was full of fiery shapes,
> Of burning cressets."

[4] Compare Homer, Il. i., where Vulcan (the same as Mulciber) describes his misfortune:—

> " Once in your cause I felt his matchless might,
> Hurled headlong downward, from the ethereal height,
> Tost all the day in rapid circles round;
> Nor, till the sun descended, touched the ground;
> Breathless I fell, in giddy motion lost;
> The Sinthians raised me on the Lemnian coast."—*Pope.*

From Heaven, they fabled, thrown by angry Jove
Sheer o'er the crystal battlements; from morn
To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,
A summer's day; and with the setting sun
Dropped from the zenith like a falling star,
On Lemnos the Ægean isle: thus they relate,
Erring; for he with this rebellious rout
Fell long before; nor aught availed him now
To have built in Heaven high towers; nor did he 'scape
By all his engines,[1] but was headlong sent
With his industrious crew to build in Hell.
Meanwhile the wingéd heralds by command
Of sovereign power, with awful ceremony
And trumpet's sound, throughout the host proclaim
A solemn council forthwith to be held
At Pandemonium, the high capital
Of Satan and his peers: their summons called
From every band and squaréd regiment
By place or choice the worthiest; they anon
With hundreds and with thousands trooping came
Attended: all access was thronged, the gates
And porches wide, but chief the spacious hall
(Though like a covered field, where champions bold
Wont ride in armed, and at the Soldan's chair
Defied the best of Panim[2] chivalry
To mortal combat, or career with lance),
Thick swarmed, both on the ground and in the air
Brushed with the hiss of rustling wings. As bees[3]
In spring time, when the sun with Taurus rides,
Pour forth their populous youth about the hive
In clusters; they among fresh dews and flowers
Fly to and fro, or on the smoothéd plank,
The suburb of their straw-built citadel,
New rubbed with balm, expatiate and confer
Their state affairs. So thick the airy crowd

[1] *i. e.* means, contrivances.
[2] Pagan.
[3] "As from some rocky clift the shepherd sees
Clustering in heaps on heaps the driving bees,
Rolling, and blackening, swarms succeeding swarms,
With deeper murmurs and more hoarse alarms;
Dusky they spread, a close embodied crowd,
And o'er the vale descends the living cloud."
—*Pope's Iliad*, book ii.

Swarmed and were straitened; till, the signal given,
Behold a wonder! they but now who seemed
In bigness to surpass earth's giant sons
Now less than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room
Throng numberless, like that pygmean race
Beyond the Indian mount, or fairy elves,
Whose midnight revels by a forest side
Or fountain some belated peasant sees,
Or dreams he sees, while overhead the moon[1]
Sits arbitress, and nearer to the earth
Wheels her pale course; they, on their mirth and dance
Intent, with jocund music charm his ear;
At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.
Thus incorporeal spirits to smallest forms
Reduced their shapes immense, and were at large,
Though without number still amidst the hall
Of that infernal court. But far within,
And in their own dimensions like themselves,
The great seraphic lords and cherubim
In close recess and secret conclave sat,
A thousand demigods on golden seats,
Frequent and full.[2] After short silence then
And summons read, the great consult began.

[1] This alludes to the part which the moon is supposed to play in the revels of elves and fairies.

[2] So we have in Latin *frequens senatus*, a full house. And he makes use of the same expression in English prose. "The assembly was full and frequent according to summons." See his History of England in the reign of Edward the Confessor.—*Newton*.

END OF THE FIRST BOOK.

BOOK II.

THE ARGUMENT.

The consultation begun, Satan debates whether another battle be to be hazarded for the recovery of Heaven: some advise it, others dissuade: a third proposal is preferred, mentioned before by Satan, to search the truth of that prophecy or tradition in Heaven concerning another world, and another kind of creature equal or not much inferior to themselves, about this time to be created: their doubt who should be sent on this difficult search: Satan their chief undertakes alone the voyage, is honoured and applauded. The council thus ended, the rest betake them several ways, and to several employments, as their inclinations lead them, to entertain the time till Satan return. He passes on his journey to Hell-gates, finds them shut, and who sat there to guard them, by whom at length they are opened, and discover to him the great gulf between Hell and Heaven; with what difficulty he passes through, directed by Chaos, the power of that place, to the sight of this new world which he sought.

High on a throne of royal state, which far
Outshone the wealth of Ormus[1] and of Ind,
Or where the gorgeous east[2] with richest hand
Showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold,
Satan exalted sat, by merit raised
To that bad eminence; and from despair

[1] An island in the Persian Gulf, celebrated for its wealth in diamonds.

[2] Not that Ormus and Ind were in the west, but the sense is that the throne of Satan outshone diamonds, or pearls and gold, the choicest whereof are produced in the east. Spenser expresses the same thought thus, F. Q. iii. 4, 23.

"that it did pass
The wealth of th' east, and pomp of Persian kings."

And the east is said to "shower them on her kings," in allusion to the

Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires
Beyond thus high, insatiate to pursue
Vain war with Heaven, and by success untaught
His proud imaginations thus displayed
"Powers and dominions,[1] deities of Heaven,
For since no deep within her gulf can hold
Immortal vigour, though oppressed and fallen,
I give not Heaven for lost. From this descent
Celestial virtues rising, will appear
More glorious and more dread than from no fall,
And trust themselves to fear no second fate.
Me, though just right, and the fixed laws of Heaven,
Did first create your leader, next free choice,
With what besides, in council or in fight,
Hath been achieved of merit, yet this loss,
Thus far at least recovered, hath much more
Established in a safe unenvied throne
Yielded with full consent. The happier state
In Heaven, which follows dignity, might draw
Envy from each inferior;[2] but who here
Will envy whom the highest place exposes
Foremost to stand against the Thunderer's aim
Your bulwark, and condemns to greatest share
Of endless pain? Where there is then no good
For which to strive, no strife can grow up there
From faction; for none sure will claim in Hell

custom used at the coronation of some kings in the east, of showering gold and precious stones upon their heads. And the same sort of metaphor is used in Shakespear, Ant. and Cleop. act. ii.

"I'll set thee in a shower of gold, and hail
Rich pearls upon thee."

And this pearl and gold is called "barbaric pearl and gold," after the manner of the Greeks and Romans, who accounted all other nations barbarous; as Virgil, Æn. ii. 504.

"Barbarico postes auro spoliisque superbi."

and Æn. viii. 685.

"Hinc ope barbarica variisque Antonius armis
Victor ab auroræ populis."—*Newton.*

[1] Cf. Coloss. i. 16.

[2] He means that the higher in dignity any being was in heaven, the happier his state was; and that therefore inferiors might there envy superiors, because they were happier too.—*Pearce.*

Precedence; none,[1] whose portion is so small
Of present pain, that with ambitious mind
Will covet more. With this advantage then
To union, and firm faith, and firm accord,
More than can be in Heaven, we now return
To claim our just inheritance of old,
Surer to prosper than prosperity
Could have assured us; and by what best way,
Whether of open war or covert guile,
We now debate: who can advise, may speak."
He ceased; and next him Moloch, sceptred king,
Stood up, the strongest and the fiercest spirit
That fought in Heaven, now fiercer by despair:
His trust was with the Eternal to be deemed
Equal in strength, and rather than be less
Cared not to be at all; with that care lost
Went all his fear: of God, or Hell, or worse,
He reck'd not,[2] and these words thereafter spake.
"My sentence is for open war: of wiles,
More inexpert, I boast not: them let those
Contrive who need, or when they need, not now
For while they sit contriving, shall the rest,
Millions that stand in arms, and longing wait
The signal to ascend, sit lingering here
Heaven's fugitives, and for their dwelling-place
Accept this dark opprobrious den of shame,
The prison of his tyranny, who reigns
By our delay? No, let us rather choose,
Armed with Hell's flames and fury, all at once
O'er Heaven's high towers to force resistless way,
Turning our tortures into horrid arms
Against the torturer; when to meet the noise
Of his almighty engine he shall hear
Infernal thunder, and for lightning see
Black fire and horror shot with equal rage
Among his angels, and his throne itself,
Mixed with Tartarean sulphur, and strange fire,
His own invented torments. But, perhaps,

[1] Read and point thus:—

"none. Whose portion is so small
Of present pain that with ambitious mind
He'll covet more? With."—*Bentley.*

[2] Cared not.

The way seems difficult and steep to scale
With upright wing against a higher foe.
Let such bethink them, if the sleepy drench
Of that forgetful lake benumn not still,
That in our proper motion we ascend
Up to our native seat: descent and fall
To us is adverse. Who but felt of late,
When the fierce foe hung on our broken rear
Insulting, and pursued us through the deep,
With what compulsion and laborious flight
We sunk thus low? The ascent is easy then,
The event is feared: should we again provoke
Our stronger, some worse way his wrath may find
To our destruction; if there be in hell
Fear to be worse destroyed: what can be worse
Than to dwell here, driven out from bliss, condemned
In this abhorréd deep to utter woe;
Where pain of unextinguishable fire
Must exercise[1] us without hope of end,
The vassals[2] of his anger, when the scourge
Inexorable, and the torturing hour,
Calls us to penance? More destroyed than thus
We should be quite abolished and expire.
What fear we, then? what doubt we to incense
His utmost ire? which, to the height enraged,
Will either quite consume us, and reduce
To nothing this essential (happier far[3]
Than miserable to have eternal being):
Or if our substance be indeed divine,
And cannot cease to be, we are at worst
On this side nothing; and by proof we feel
Our power sufficient to disturb his heaven,
And with perpetual inroads to alarm,
Though inaccessible, his fatal throne:[4]
Which, if not victory, is yet revenge."
He ended frowning, and his look denounced
Desperate revenge, and battle dangerous
To less than gods.[5] On the other side up rose

[1] Harass, torture.
[2] Or, perhaps, "vessels," from Rom. ix. 22.—*Bentley.*
[3] Cf. Matt. xxvi. 24. Mark xiv. 21.
[4] *i. e.* his throne upheld by fate.
[5] *i. e.* angels.

Belial, in act more graceful and humane,
A fairer person lost not Heaven; he seemed
For dignity composed and high exploit:
But all was false and hollow; though his tongue
Dropped manna,[1] and could make the worse appear[2]
The better reason, to perplex and dash
Maturest counsels, for his thoughts were low,
To vice industrious, but to nobler deeds
Timorous and slothful; yet he pleased the ear,
And with persuasive accent thus began.
"I should be much for open war, O peers,
As not behind in hate; if what was urged
Main reason to persuade immediate war,
Did not dissuade me most, and seem to cast
Ominous conjecture on the whole success;
When he who most excels in fact of arms,[3]
In what he counsels and in what excels
Mistrustful, grounds his courage on despair
And utter dissolution, as the scope
Of all his aim, after some dire revenge
First, what revenge? The towers of Heaven are filled
With armed watch, that render all access
Impregnable; oft on the bordering deep
Encamp their legions, or with obscure wing
Scout far and wide into the realm of night,
Scorning surprise. Or could we break our way
By force, and at our heels all Hell should rise
With blackest insurrection, to confound
Heaven's purest light, yet our great enemy
All incorruptible would on his throne
Sit unpolluted, and the ethereal mould
Incapable of stain would soon expel
Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire
Victorious. Thus repulsed, our final hope
Is flat despair; we must exasperate
The Almighty Victor to spend all his rage,
And that must end us; that must be our cure,

[1] So, Shakspeare, Merchant of Venice, act v.

"Fair ladie, you drop manna in the way
Of starvéd people."

[2] This was the well known profession of the Sophists, τὸν λόγον τὸν ἥττω κρείττω ποιεῖν.

[3] Deed.

To be no more—sad cure! for who would lose,
Though full of pain, this intellectual being,
Those thoughts that wander through eternity,
To perish rather, swallowed up and lost
In the wide womb of uncreated night,
Devoid of sense and motion? And who knows,
Let this be good, whether our angry foe
Can give it, or will ever? how he can,
Is doubtful; that he never will, is sure
Will he, so wise, let loose at once his ire,
Belike through impotence,[1] or unaware,
To give his enemies their wish, and end
Them in his anger, whom his anger saves
To punish endless? Wherefore cease we then?
Say they who counsel war, we are decreed,
Reserved, and destined to eternal woe;
Whatever doing, what can we suffer more,
What can we suffer worse? Is this then worst,
Thus fitting, thus consulting, thus in arms?
What when we fled amain, pursued and struck
With Heaven's afflicting thunder, and besought
The deep to shelter us? this Hell then seemed
A refuge from those wounds: or when we lay
Chained on the burning lake? that sure was worse,
What if the breath[2] that kindled those grim fires,
Awaked should blow them into sevenfold rage,
And plunge us in the flames? or from above
Should intermitted vengeance arm again
His red right hand[3] to plague us? what if all
Her stores were opened, and this firmament
Of Hell should spout her cataracts of fire,
Impendent horrors, threatening hideous fall
One day upon our heads; while we, perhaps,
Designing or exhorting glorious war,
Caught in a fiery tempest shall be hurled
Each on his rock transfixed, the sport and prey
Of racking whirlwinds, or for ever sunk
Under yon boiling ocean, wrapt in chains;
There to converse with everlasting groans,
Unrespited, unpitied, unreprieved,

[1] *i. e.* weakness of mind, want of self-restraint.
[2] Cf. Is. xxx. 33.
[3] "Et *rubenti dextera* sacras jaculatus arces."—*Hor. Od.* I. 2.

Ages of hopeless end? this would be worse.
War, therefore, open or concealed, alike
My voice dissuades; for what can force or guile
With him, or who deceive his mind, whose eye
Views all things at one view? he from Heaven's height
All these our motions vain sees and derides;[1]
Not more almighty to resist our might
Than wise to frustrate all our plots and wiles.
Shall we then live thus vile, the race of Heaven
Thus trampled, thus expelled to suffer here
Chains and these torments? Better these than worse
By my advice; since fate inevitable
Subdues us, and omnipotent decree,
The victor's will. To suffer, as to do,
Our strength is equal,[2] nor the law unjust
That so ordains; this was at first resolved
If we were wise, against so great a foe
Contending, and so doubtful what might fall
I laugh, when those who at the spear are bold
And venturous, if that fail them, shrink and fear
What yet they know must follow, to endure
Exile, or ignominy, or bonds, or pain,
The sentence of their conqueror; this is now
Our doom; which if we can sustain and bear,
Our supreme foe in time may much remit
His anger, and perhaps thus far removed
Not mind us not offending, satisfied
With what is punished; whence these raging fires
Will slacken, if his breath stir not their flames.
Our purer essence then will overcome
Their noxious vapour, or inured not feel,
Or changed at length and to the place conformed
In temper and in nature, will receive
Familiar the fierce heat, and void of pain;
This horror will grow mild, this darkness light,
Besides what hope the never-ending flight
Of future days may bring, what chance, what change
Worth waiting, since our present lot appears
For happy though but ill, for ill not worst,
If we procure not to ourselves more woe."

[1] See Psalm ii. 4.

[2] Et facere, et pati. So Mucius Scævola boasted that he was a Roman, and knew as well how to suffer as to act. Et facere et pati fortia Romanum est. Liv. ii. 11.—*Newton.*

Thus Belial, with words clothed in reason's garb,
Counselled ignoble ease, and peaceful sloth,
Not peace: and after him thus Mammon spake.
"Either to disenthrone the King of Heaven
We war, if war be best, or to regain
Our own right lost. him to unthrone we then
May hope, when everlasting Fate shall yield
To fickle Chance, and Chaos judge the strife:[1]
The former[2] vain to hope argues as vain
The latter:[3] for what place can be for us
Within Heaven's bound, unless Heaven's Lord supreme
We overpower? Suppose he should relent,
And publish grace to all on promise made
Of new subjection; with what eyes could we
Stand in his presence humble, and receive
Strict laws imposed, to celebrate his throne
With warbled hymns, and to his Godhead sing
Forced hallelujahs; while he lordly sits
Our envied sovereign, and his altar breathes
Ambrosial odours and ambrosial flowers,
Our servile offerings? This must be our task
In Heaven, this our delight; how wearisome
Eternity so spent in worship paid
To whom we hate! Let us not then pursue
By force impossible, by leave obtained
Unacceptable, though in Heaven, our state
Of splendid vassalage; but rather seek
Our own good from ourselves, and from our own
Live to ourselves, though in this vast recess,
Free, and to none accountable, preferring
Hard liberty before the easy yoke
Of servile pomp. Our greatness will appear
Then most conspicuous, when great things of small,
Useful of hurtful, prosperous of adverse
We can create, and in what place soe'er
Thrive under evil, and work ease out of pain
Through labour and endurance. This deep world
Of darkness do we dread? How oft amidst
Thick clouds and dark doth Heaven's all-ruling Sire
Choose to reside,[4] his glory unobscured,

[1] *i. e.* the strife between God and ourselves.
[2] *i. e.* to unthrone the King of Heaven.
[3] *i. e.* to regain our lost rights.
[4] Cf. Psalm xviii. 11—13, and xcvii. 2.

And with the majesty of darkness round
Covers his throne; from whence deep thunders roar
Mustering their rage, and Heaven resembles Hell?
As he our darkness, cannot we his light
Imitate when we please? This desert soil
Wants not her hidden lustre, gems and gold;
Nor want we skill or art, from whence to raise
Magnificence; and what can Heaven show more?
Our torments also may in length of time
Become our elements, these piercing fires
As soft as now severe, our temper changed
Into their temper; which must needs remove
The sensible[1] of pain. All things invite
To peaceful counsels, and the settled state
Of order, how in safety best we may
Compose our present evils, with regard
Of what we are and where,[2] dismissing quite
All thoughts of war. Ye have what I advise."
He scarce had finished, when such murmur filled
The assembly, as when hollow rocks retain
The sound of blustering winds, which all night long
Had roused the sea, now with hoarse cadence lull
Seafaring men o'erwatched, whose bark by chance
Or pinnace anchors in a craggy bay
After the tempest: such applause was heard
As Mammon ended, and his sentence pleased,
Advising peace; for such another field
They dreaded worse than Hell, so much the fear
Of thunder and the sword of Michael
Wrought still within them; and no less desire
To found this nether empire, which might rise
By policy, and long process of time,
In emulation opposite to Heaven.
Which when Beëlzebub perceived, than whom,
Satan except, none higher sat, with grave
Aspect he rose, and in his rising seemed
A pillar of state;[4] deep on his front engraven
Deliberation sat and public care;

[1] *i. e.* sense, sensation.
[2] Some editions read "were."
[3] Compare Virgil, Æn. x. 96 sq.
[4] Cf. Shakspeare, 2 Hen. VI., act i. :—

"Brave peers of England, *pillars of the state*."

And princely counsel in his face yet shone,
Majestic though in ruin; sage he stood
With Atlantean[1] shoulders fit to bear
The weight of mightiest monarchies; his look
Drew audience and attention still as night
Or summer's noontide[2] air, while thus he spake:
"Thrones and imperial powers, offspring of Heaven,
Ethereal virtues! or these titles now
Must we renounce, and, changing style, be called
Princes of Hell? for so the popular vote
Inclines, here to continue, and build up here
A growing empire; doubtless; while we dream,
And know not that the King of Heaven hath doomed
This place our dungeon, not our safe retreat
Beyond his potent arm, to live exempt
From Heaven's high jurisdiction, in new league
Banded against his throne, but to remain
In strictest bondage, though thus far removed,
Under the inevitable curb, reserved
His captive multitude; for he, be sure,
In height or depth, still first and last will reign
Sole king, and of his kingdom lose no part
By our revolt, but over Hell extend
His empire, and with iron sceptre[3] rule
Us here, as with his golden those in Heaven
What sit we then projecting peace and war?
War hath determined us, and foiled with loss
Irreparable; terms of peace yet none
Vouchsafed or sought; for what peace will be given
To us enslaved, but[4] custody severe,
And stripes, and arbitrary punishment
Inflicted? and what peace can we return,
But to our power hostility and hate,
Untamed reluctance, and revenge though slow,
Yet ever plotting how the Conqueror least

[1] Alluding to the fable of Atlas bearing Heaven on his shoulders. Cf. Eurip., Ion. i.

[2] "Noontide" is the same as "noontime," when in hot countries there is hardly a breath of wind stirring, and men and beasts, by reason of the intense heat, retire to shade and rest. This is the custom of Italy particularly, where our author lived some time.—*Newton.*

[3] Cf. Ps. ii. 9.

[4] *i. e.* save, except.

May reap his conquest, and may least rejoice
In doing what we most in suffering feel?
Nor will occasion want, nor shall we need
With dangerous expedition to invade
Heaven, whose high walls fear no assault or siege,
Or ambush from the deep. What if we find
Some easier enterprise? There is a place
(If ancient and prophetic fame in Heaven
Err not), another world, the happy seat
Of some new race called Man, about this time
To be created like to us, though less
In power and excellence, but favoured more
Of him who rules above; so was his will
Pronounced among the gods, and by an oath,
That shook Heaven's whole circumference,[1] confirmed.
Thither let us bend all our thoughts, to learn
What creatures there inhabit, of what mould
Or substance, how endued, and what their power,
And where their weakness, how attempted best,
By force or subtlety. Though Heaven be shut,
And Heaven's high arbitrator sit secure
In his own strength, this place may lie exposed,
The utmost border of his kingdom, left
To their defence who hold it: here, perhaps,
Some advantageous act may be achieved
By sudden onset, either with Hell-fire
To waste his whole creation, or possess
All as our own, and drive, as we were driven,
The puny habitants; or if not drive,
Seduce them to our party, that their God

[1] From Homer, Il. 1:—

"He spoke, and awful bends his sable brows;
Shakes his ambrosial curls, and gives the nod,
The stamp of fate, and sanction of the god;
High Heaven with trembling the dread signal took
And all Olympus to the centre shook."—*Pope.*

Compare Virgil, Æn. ix.:—

"To seal his sacred vow, by Styx he swore,
The lake with liquid pitch, the dreary shore,
And Phlegethon's innavigable flood,
And the black regions of his brother god:
He said; and shook the skies with his imperial nod."
—*Dryden.*

May prove their foe, and with repenting hand
Abolish his own works. This would surpass
Common revenge, and interrupt his joy[1]
In our confusion, and our joy upraise
In his disturbance; when his darling sons,
Hurled headlong to partake with us, shall curse
Their frail original, and faded bliss,
Faded so soon. Advise if this be worth
Attempting, or to sit in darkness here
Hatching vain empires." Thus Beëlzebub
Pleaded his devilish counsel, first devised
By Satan, and in part proposed; for whence,
But from the author of all ill, could spring
So deep a malice, to confound the race
Of mankind in one root, and earth with Hell
To mingle and involve, done all to spite
The great Creator? But their spite still serves
His glory to augment. The bold design
Pleased highly those infernal states, and joy
Sparkled in all their eyes; with full assent
They vote: whereat his speech he thus renews.
"Well have ye judged, well ended long debate,
Synod of gods, and like to what ye are,
Great things resolved, which from the lowest deep
Will once more lift us up, in spite of fate,
Nearer our ancient seat; perhaps in view
Of those bright confines, whence with neighbouring arms
And opportune excursions we may chance
Re-enter Heaven; or else in some mild zone
Dwell, not unvisited of Heaven's fair light,
Secure, and at the brightening orient beam
Purge off this gloom; the soft delicious air,
To heal the scar of these corrosive fires,
Shall breathe her balm. But first, whom shall we send
In search of this new world; whom shall we find
Sufficient? who shall tempt with wandering feet
The dark, unbottomed, infinite abyss,
And through the palpable obscure find out
His uncouth way, or spread his airy flight,
Upborne with indefatigable wings,

[1] Relative to the use of terms, denoting human affections, as applied to God, compare Tomlins on the Articles, v. ii. p. 55, and my edition of Calmet, art. ANGER.

Over the vast abrupt, ere he arrive[1]
The happy isle? What strength, what art can then
Suffice, or what evasion bear him safe
Through the strict sentries and stations thick
Of angels watching round? Here he had need
All circumspection, and we now no less
Choice in our suffrage; for on whom we send,
The weight of all and our last hope relies."
This said, he sat, and expectation held
His look suspense, awaiting who appeared
To second or oppose, or undertake
The perilous attempt: but all sat mute,
Pondering the danger with deep thoughts; and each
In others' countenance read his own dismay
Astonished: none among the choice and prime
Of those Heaven-warring champions could be found
So hardy as to proffer or accept
Alone the dreadful voyage; till at last
Satan, whom now transcendent glory raised
Above his fellows, with monarchal pride
Conscious of highest worth, unmoved thus spake.
"O progeny of Heaven! empyreal thrones!
With reason hath deep silence and demur
Seized us, though undismayed: long is the way
And hard, that out of Hell leads up to light;[2]
Our prison strong; this huge convex[3] of fire,
Outrageous to devour, immures us round
Ninefold, and gates of burning adamant
Barred over us prohibit all egress.
These passed, if any pass, the void profound
Of unessential night receives him next
Wide gaping, and with utter loss of being
Threatens him plunged in that abortive gulf.

[1] We should now say "arrive at." But Milton has the same idiom in his prose writings, and so Shakspeare, 3 Hen. IV., act v., "have arrived our coast."

[2] He had Virgil in mind, Æn. vi.:—

> "But to return and view the cheerful skies,
> In this the task and mighty labour lies."—*Dryden.*

My limits compel me to abstain from pointing out many other coincidences.

[3] *i. e.* vault. *Convex* is properly used of the exterior surface of a globe, and *concave* of the hollow interior; but the distinction is not always observed. Cf. os. 635, "the fiery *concave*."

If thence he 'scape into whatever world,
Or unknown region, what remains him less
Than unknown dangers, and as hard escape?
But I should ill become this throne, O peers,
And this imperial sovereignty, adorned
With splendour, armed with power, if aught proposed
And judged of public moment, in the shape
Of difficulty or danger could deter
Me from attempting Wherefore do I assume[1]
These royalties, and not refuse to reign,
Refusing to accept as great a share
Of hazard as of honour, due alike
To him who reigns, and so much to him due
Of hazard more, as he above the rest
High honoured sits? Go, therefore, mighty powers,
Terror of Heaven, though fallen; intend at home,
While here shall be our home, what best may ease
The present misery, and render Hell
More tolerable; if there be cure or charm
To respite, or deceive, or slack the pain
Of this ill mansion: intermit no watch
Against a wakeful foe, while I abroad
Through all the coasts of dark destruction seek
Deliverance for us all: this enterprise
None shall partake with me." Thus saying rose
The monarch, and prevented all reply,
Prudent, lest from his resolution raised
Others among the chief might offer now
(Certain to be refused) what erst they feared;
And so refused might in opinion stand
His rivals, winning cheap the high repute

[1] Milton evidently imitates the magnificent speech of Sarpedon, in Iliad, xii.:—

"Why boast we, Glaucus, our extended reign,
Where Xanthus' streams enrich the Lycian plain,
Our numerous herds that range the fruitful field,
And hills where vines their purple harvest yield,
Our foaming bowls with purer nectar crowned,
Our feasts enhanced with music's sprightly sound?
Why on those shores are we with joy surveyed,
Admired as heroes, and as gods obeyed?
Unless great acts superior merit prove,
And vindicate the bounteous powers above.
'Tis ours, the dignity they give, to grace;
The first in valour, as the first in place," &c.—*Pope.*

Which he through hazard huge must earn. But they
Dreaded not more the adventure than his voice
Forbidding; and at once with him they rose;
Their rising all at once was as the sound
Of thunder heard remote. Towards him they bend
With awful reverence prone, and as a god
Extol him equal to the Highest in Heaven:
Nor failed they to express how much they praised,
That for the general safety he despised
His own; for neither do the spirits damned
Lose all their virtue; lest bad[1] men should boast
Their specious deeds on earth, which glory excites,
Or close ambition varnished o'er with zeal.
Thus they their doubtful consultations dark
Ended rejoicing in their matchless chief:
As when from mountain tops the dusky clouds[2]
Ascending, while the north wind sleeps, o'erspread
Heaven's cheerful face, the lowering element
Scowls o'er the darkened landskip snow or shower;
If chance the radiant sun with farewell sweet
Extend his evening beam, the fields revive,
The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds
Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings.
O shame to men! devil with devil damned
Firm concord holds, men only disagree
Of creatures rational, though under hope
Of heavenly grace; and, God proclaiming peace,
Yet live in hatred, enmity, and strife
Among themselves, and levy cruel wars,
Wasting the earth, each other to destroy:

[1] "This remark (of the devils not losing all their virtue) I make, lest bad men should boast." Such is the full sense, according to Pearce, who observes, "Milton here seems to have had in view Ephes. ii. 8 sq.: "By grace are ye saved, through faith; not of works, lest any man should boast." In which St. Paul put them in mind of that, and made that remark to prevent them boasting.

[2] Compare II. xvi.:—

"So when thick clouds enwrap the mountain's head,
O'er Heaven's expanse like one black ceiling spread;
Sudden the Thunderer, with a flashing ray,
Bursts through the darkness, and lets down the day;
The hills shine out, the rocks in prospect rise,
And streams, and vales, and forests strike the eyes.
The smiling scene wide opens to the sight,
And all the unmeasured æther flames with light."—*Pope.*

As if (which might induce us to accord)
Man had not hellish foes enow besides,
That day and night for his destruction wait.
The Stygian council thus dissolved; and forth
In order came the grand infernal peers:
Midst came their mighty paramount, and seemed
Alone the antagonist of Heaven, nor less
Than Hell's dread emperor with pomp supreme,
And godlike imitated state; him round
A globe[1] of fiery seraphim enclosed
With bright emblazonry and horrent[2] arms
Then of their session ended they bid cry
With trumpets regal sound the great result:
Towards the four winds, four speedy cherubim
Put to their mouths the sounding alchemy[3]
By heralds' voice explained; the hollow abyss
Heard far and wide, and all the host of Hell
With deafening shout returned them loud acclaim.
Thence more at ease their minds, and somewhat raised
By false presumptuous hope, the rangéd powers
Disband, and wandering, each his several way
Pursues, as inclination or sad choice
Leads him perplexed, where he may likeliest find
Truce to his restless thoughts, and entertain
The irksome hours, till his great chief return.
Part on the plain, or in the air sublime,
Upon the wing, or in swift race contend,
As at the Olympian games or Pythian fields;
Part curb their fiery steeds, or shun the goal
With rapid wheels, or fronted brigades form.
As when to warn proud cities, war appears
Waged in the troubled sky, and armies rush
To battle in the clouds,[4] before each van

[1] *i. e.* a thick battalion or troop encircling him.

[2] *i. e.* bristling, terrible.

[3] This denotes any compound metal, not being used in the formation of musical instruments.

[4] Such phenomena have been frequently reported; never so amusingly as in "Strange and Wonderful News from Chipping Norton, in the County of Oxon, of certain dreadful apparitions which were seen in the air on the 26th of July, 1610, at half an hour after nine o'clock at noon, and continued till eleven, in which time was seen appearances of several flaming swords, strange motions of the superior orbs; with the unusual sparkling of the stars, with their dreadful continuations," &c. &c.—See Scott's Antiquary, chap. iii.

Prick forth the airy knights, and couch their spears[1]
Till thickest legions close; with feats of arms
From either end of Heaven the welkin burns.
Others with vast Typhœan rage, more fell,
Rend up both rocks and hills, and ride the air
In whirlwind; Hell scarce holds the wild uproar
As when Alcides,[2] from Oechalia crowned
With conquest, felt the envenomed robe, and tore
Through pain up by the roots Thessalian pines,
And Lichas from the top of Oeta threw
Into th' Euboic sea. Others more mild,
Retreated in a silent valley, sing
With notes angelical to many a harp
Their own heroic deeds and hapless fall
By doom of battle; and complain that fate
Free virtue should enthral to force or chance.
Their song was partial, but the harmony
(What could it less when spirits immortal sing?)
Suspended Hell, and took with ravishment
The thronging audience. In discourse more sweet
(For eloquence the soul, song charms the sense),
Others apart sat on a hill retired,
In thoughts more elevate, and reasoned high
Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate,
Fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute,
And found no end, in wandering mazes lost
Of good and evil much they argued then,
Of happiness and final misery,
Passion and apathy, and glory and shame,
Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy:
Yet with a pleasing sorcery could charm
Pain for a while, or anguish, and excite

[1] *i. e.* fix them in their rests. The *rest* was made in the breast of the armour, and derived its name from *arrester*, to stop.—*Richardson.*

[2] As when Hercules, named Alcides from his grandfather Alcæus, "from Oechalia crowned with conquest," after his return from the conquest of Oechalia, a city of Bœotia, having brought with him from thence Iole, the king's daughter, "felt the envenomed robe," which was sent him by Deianira in jealousy of his new mistress, and stuck so close to his skin that he could not pull off the one without pulling off the other, "and tore through pain up by the roots Thessalian pines, and Lichas" who had brought him the poisoned robe, "from the top of Oeta," a mountain in the borders of Thessaly, "threw into the Euboic sea," the sea near Eubœa, an island in the Archipelago.—*Newton.*

Fallacious hope, or arm the obdured[1] breast
With stubborn patience as with triple steel.
Another part, in squadrons and gross bands,
On bold adventure to discover wide
That dismal world, if any clime perhaps
Might yield them easier habitation, bend
Four ways their flying march, along the banks
Of four infernal rivers, that disgorge
Into the burning lake their baleful streams;
Abhorréd Styx,[2] the flood of deadly hate;
Sad Acheron of sorrow, black and deep;
Cocytus, named of lamentation loud
Heard on the rueful stream; fierce Phlegethon,
Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.
Far off from these a slow and silent stream,
Lethe, the river of oblivion, rolls
Her watery labyrinth, whereof who drinks,
Forthwith his former state and being forgets,
Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.
Beyond this flood a frozen continent
Lies dark and wild, beat with perpetual storms
Of whirlwind and dire hail, which on firm land
Thaws not, but gathers heap, and ruin seems

[1] Hardened.

[2] The Greeks reckon up five rivers in Hell, and call them after the names of the noxious springs and rivers in their own country. Our poet follows their example both as to the number and the names of these infernal rivers, and excellently describes their nature and properties with the explanation of their names. "Styx," so named of a Greek word στυγέω that signifies to hate and abhor, and therefore called here "abhorréd Styx, the flood of deadly hate;" and by Virgil, "palus inamabilis, Æn. vi. 438. "Acheron" has its name from ἄχος dolor, and ῥέω fluo, "flowing with grief;" and is represented accordingly "sad Acheron," the river "of sorrow," as Styx was of hate, "black and deep," agreeable to Virgil's character of it, Æn. vi. 107: "Tenebrosa palus Acheronte refuso." "Cocytus, named of lamentation," because derived from a Greek word κωκύω, signifying to weep and lament: as "Phlegethon" is from another Greek word φλέγω, signifying to burn; and therefore rightly described here "fierce Phlegethon, whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage," as it is by Virgil, Æn. vi. 550. We know not what to say as to the situation of these rivers. Homer, the most ancient poet, represents Cocytus as branching out of Styx, and both Cocytus and Phlegethon (or Pyriphlegethon) as flowing into Acheron, Odyss. x. 513; and perhaps he describes their situation as it really was in Greece; but Virgil and the other poets frequently confound them, and mention

Of ancient pile; all else deep snow and ice,
A gulf profound as that Serbonian[1] bog
Betwixt Damiata and Mount Casius old,
Where armies whole have sunk: the parching air
Burns frore,[2] and cold performs the effect of fire
Thither by harpy-footed furies haled,[3]
At certain revolutions all the damned
Are brought; and feel by turns the bitter change
Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce:
From beds of raging fire to starve in ice
Their soft ethereal warmth, and there to pine
Immoveable, infixed, and frozen round,
Periods of time; thence hurried back to fire,
They ferry over this Lethéan sound
Both to and fro, their sorrow to augment,
And wish and struggle, as they pass, to reach
The tempting stream, with one small drop to lose
In sweet forgetfulness all pain and woe,
All in one moment, and so near the brink;
But fate withstands, and to oppose the attempt
Medusa[4] with Gorgonian terror guards

their names and places without sufficient difference or distinction. Our poet, therefore, was at liberty to draw (as I may say) a new map of these rivers; and he supposes "a burning lake" agreeably to Scripture, that often mentions "the lake of fire;" and he makes these four rivers to flow from four different quarters, and empty themselves into this burning lake, which gives us a much greater idea than any of the heathen poets. Besides these there is a fifth river called "Lethe," which name in Greek signifies "forgetfulness," and its waters are said to have occasioned that quality, Æn. vi. 714.—*Newton.*

[1] Serbonis was a lake 200 furlongs in length and 1,000 in compass, between the ancient mountain Casius, and Damiata, a city of Egypt on one of the more eastern mouths of the Nile. It was surrounded on all sides by hills of loose sand, which, carried into the water by high winds, so thickened the lake as not to be distinguished from part of the continent, where whole armies have been swallowed up.—*Hume.*

[2] Frostily. Cf. Ecclus. xliii. 20, sq.; Ps. cxxi. 6.

[3] Dragged. So Spenser, F. Q. v. 226: "who rudely haled her forth without remorse."

[4] Medusa was one of the Gorgon monsters whose locks were serpents so terrible that they turned the beholders into stone. Ulysses, in Homer, was desirous of seeing more of the departed heroes, but I was afraid, says he, Odyss. xi.:—

"Lest Gorgon rising from the infernal lakes,
With horrors armed, and curls of hissing snakes,
Should fix me, stiffened at the monstrous sight,
A stony image in eternal night."

The ford, and of itself the water flies
All taste of living wight, as once it fled
The lip of Tantalus. Thus roving on
In cónfused march forlorn, the adventurous bands
With shuddering horror pale, and eyes aghast,
Viewed first their lamentable lot, and found
No rest: through many a dark and dreary vale
They passed, and many a region dolorous,
O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp,
Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death,
A universe of death, which God by curse
Created evil, for evil only good,
Where all life dies, death lives, and nature breeds,
Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,
Abominable, inutterable, and worse
Than fables yet have feigned, or fear conceived,
Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimæras dire.[1]
Meanwhile the adversary of God and man,
Satan, with thoughts inflamed of highest design,
Puts on swift wings, and toward the gates of Hell
Explores his solitary flight: sometimes
He scours the right hand coast, sometimes the left;
Now shaves with level wing the deep, then soars
Up to the fiery concave towering high.
As when far off at sea a fleet descried
Hangs in the clouds, by equinoctial winds
Close sailing from Bengala, or the isles
Of Ternate and Tidore,[2] whence merchants bring
Their spicy drugs: they on the trading flood
Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape
Ply stemming nightly toward the pole So seemed
Far off the flying fiend: at last appear
Hell bounds, high reaching to the horrid roof,
And thrice threefold the gates; three folds were brass,
Three iron, three of adamantine rock,

[1] Compare Tasso, iv. 5:—

"There were Celæno's foul and loathsome rout,
There Sphinges, Centaurs, there were Gorgons fell,
There howling Scyllas, yawling round about,
There serpents hiss, there seven-mouthed Hydras yell;
Chimæra there spues fire and brimstone out."—*Fairfax.*

[2] Two of the Molucca islands in the East Indian sea.

Impenetrable, impaled[1] with circling fire,
Yet unconsumed. Before the gates there sat
On either side a formidable shape;
The one seemed woman[2] to the waist, and fair,
But ended foul in many a scaly fold
Voluminous and vast, a serpent armed
With mortal sting: about her middle round
A cry of hell-hounds never ceasing barked
With wide Cerberean mouths full loud, and rung
A hideous peal; yet, when they list, would creep,
If aught disturbed their noise, into her womb,
And kennel there, yet there still barked and howled,
Within unseen. Far less abhorred than these
Vexed Scylla, bathing in the sea that parts
Calabria from the hoarse Trinacrian shore:
Nor uglier follow the night-hag, when, called
In secret, riding through the air she comes,
Lured with the smell of infant blood, to dance
With Lapland witches[3] while the labouring moon
Eclipses at their charms. The other shape,[4]

[1] Paled in, guarded with palings. Here begins the famous allegory of Milton, which is a sort of paraphrase on that text of the Apostle St. James, i. 15, "Then when lust hath conceived it bringeth forth Sin, and Sin when it is finished bringeth forth Death." The first part of the allegory says only, that Satan's intended voyage was dangerous to his being, and that he resolved, however, to venture.—*Richardson.*

[2] It is not improbable, that the author might have in mind, Spenser's description of error in the mixed shape of a woman and a serpent, Faërie Queen, b. 1, c. 1, st. 14.

> "Half like a serpent horribly displayed,
> But the other half did woman's shape retain," &c.

And, also, the image of Echidna, b. 6, c. 6, st. 10.

> "Yet did her face, and former parts, profess
> A fair young maiden, full of comely glee;
> But all her hinder parts did plain express
> A monstrous dragon, full of fearful ugliness."—*Newton.*

[3] These superstitions, it is almost needless to be observed, were thought less ridiculous in Milton's time than in our own.

[4] This poetical description of Death, our author has pretty evidently borrowed from Spenser, Faërie Queen, b. 7, cant. 7, st. 46:—

> "But after all came Life, and lastly Death,
> Death with most grim and grisly visage seen;
> Yet is he nought but parting of the breath,
> Ne ought to see, but like a shade to ween,
> Unbodied, unsouled, unheard, unseen."—*Thyer.*

If shape it might be called that shape had none
Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb,
Or substance might be called that shadow seemed.
For each seemed either; black it stood as night,
Fierce as ten furies, terrible as Hell,
And shook a dreadful dart; what seemed his head
The likeness of a kingly crown had on.
Satan was now at hand; and from his seat,
The monster moving onward came as fast
With horrid strides; Hell trembled as he strode.
The undaunted fiend what this might be admired,
Admired, not feared; God and his Son except,
Created thing nought valued he nor shunned;
And with disdainful look thus first began:
"Whence and what art thou, execrable shape,
That darest, though grim and terrible, advance
Thy miscreated [1] front athwart my way
To yonder gates? Through them I mean to pass,
That be assured, without leave asked of thee:
Retire, or taste thy folly, and learn by proof,
Hell-born, not to contend with spirits of Heaven."
To whom the goblin full of wrath replied:
"Art thou that traitor angel, art thou he,
Who first broke peace in Heaven and faith, till then
Unbroken, and in proud rebellious arms
Drew after him the third part of Heaven's sons,
Conjúred [2] against the Highest; for which both thou
And they, outcast from God, are here condemned
To waste eternal days in woe and pain?
And reckon'st thou thyself with spirits of Heaven,
Hell-doomed, and breath'st defiance here and scorn
Where I reign king; and, to enrage thee more,
Thy king and lord? Back to thy punishment,
False fugitive, and to thy speed add wings,
Lest with a whip of scorpions I pursue
Thy lingering, or with one stroke of this dart
Strange horror seize thee, and pangs unfelt before."
So spake the grisly terror, and in shape,
So speaking and so threatening, grew tenfold
More dreadful and deform: on the other side,
Incensed with indignation, Satan stood

[1] Ill-created, ill-formed.
[2] Plotting, conspiring, sworn against.

Unterrified, and like a comet burned,
That fires the length of Ophiuchus[1] huge
In the arctic sky, and from his horrid hair
Shakes pestilence and war. Each at the head
Levelled his deadly aim; their fatal hands
No second stroke intend; and such a frown
Each cast at the other, as when two black clouds,
With Heaven's artillery fraught, come rattling on
Over the Caspian,[2] then stand front to front,
Hovering a space, till winds the signal blow
To join their dark encounter in mid air:
So frowned the mighty combatants, that Hell
Grew darker at their frown, so matched they stood;
For never but once more was either like
To meet so great a foe:[3] and now great deeds
Had been achieved, whereof all Hell had rung,
Had not the snaky sorceress that sat
Fast by Hell-gate, and kept the fatal key,
Risen, and with hideous outcry rushed between.
"O father, what intends thy hand," she cried,
"Against thy only son? What fury, O son,
Possesses thee to bend that mortal dart
Against thy father's head? and knowest[4] for whom?
For him who sits above and laughs the while
At thee, ordained his drudge, to execute
Whate'er his wrath, which he calls justice, bids;
His wrath, which one day will destroy ye both."
She spake, and at her words the hellish pest
Forbore, then these to her Satan returned:
"So strange thy outcry, and thy words so strange

[1] *i. e.* a length of about forty degrees, "in the arctic sky," or the northern hemisphere, "and from his horrid hair shakes pestilence and war." Poetry delights in omens, prodigies, and such wonderful events as were supposed to follow upon the appearance of comets, eclipses, and the like. We have another instance of this nature in i. 598; and Tasso in the same manner compares Argantes to a comet, and mentions the like fatal effects, cant. 7, st. 52:—

"As when a comet far and wide descried,
In scorn of Phœbus 'midst bright Heaven doth shine,
And tidings sad of death and mischief brings
To mighty lords, to monarchs, and to kings."
—*Fairfax. Newton.*

[2] A sea particularly noted for storms and tempests

[3] Jesus Christ.

[4] *i. e.* even when thou knowest.

Thou interposest, that my sudden hand
Prevented spares to tell thee yet by deeds
What it intends; till first I know of thee,
What thing thou art, thus double-formed, and why
In this infernal vale first met thou call'st
Me father, and that phantasm callest my son;
I know thee not, nor ever saw till now
Sight more detestable than him and thee."
To whom thus the portress of Hell-gate replied:
"Hast thou forgot me then, and do I seem
Now in thine eye so foul? once deemed so fair
In Heaven, when at the assembly, and in sight
Of all the seraphim with thee combined
In bold conspiracy against Heaven's King,
All on a sudden miserable pain[1]
Surprised thee, dim thine eyes, and dizzy swum
In darkness, while thy head flames thick and fast
Threw forth, till on the left side opening wide,
Likest to thee in shape and countenance bright,
Then shining heavenly fair, a goddess armed
Out of thy head I sprung: amazement seized
All the host of Heaven; back they recoiled afraid
At first, and called me Sin, and for a sign
Portentous held me; but, familiar grown,
I pleased, and with attractive graces won
The most averse, thee chiefly, who full oft
Thyself in me thy perfect image viewing
Becamest enamoured, and such joy thou took'st
With me in secret, that my womb conceived
A growing burden. Meanwhile war arose,
And fields were fought in Heaven; wherein remained
(For what could else?) to our almighty foe
Clear victory, to our part loss and rout
Through all the empyréan: down they fell
Driven headlong from the pitch of Heaven, down
Into this deep, and in the general fall
I also; at which time this powerful key
Into my hand was given, with charge to keep
These gates for ever shut, which none can pass
Without my opening. Pensive here I sat

[1] This description of Sin springing from the head of Satan is ably imitated from the classical descriptions of the birth of Minerva from the head of Jupiter.

Alone, but long I sat not, till my womb,
Pregnant by thee, and now excessive grown,
Prodigious motion felt and rueful throes.
At last this odious offspring whom thou seest,
Thine own begotten, breaking violent way,
Tore through my entrails, that with fear and pain
Distorted, all my nether shape thus grew
Transformed: but he my inbred enemy
Forth issued, brandishing his fatal dart
Made to destroy: I fled, and cried out 'Death!'
Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sighed
From all her caves, and back resounded 'Death!'
I fled, but he pursued (though more, it seems,
Inflamed with lust than rage), and swifter far,
Me overtook, his mother, all dismayed,
And in embraces forcible and foul
Engendering with me, of that rape begot
These yelling monsters, that with ceaseless cry
Surround me, as thou sawest, hourly conceived
And hourly born, with sorrow infinite
To me; for when they list, into the womb
That bred them they return, and howl and gnaw
My bowels, their repast; then bursting forth
Afresh with conscious terrors vex me round,
That rest or intermission none I find.
Before mine eyes in opposition sits
Grim Death, my son and foe, who sets them on,
And me his parent would full soon devour
For want of other prey, but that he knows
His end with mine involved; and knows that I
Should prove a bitter morsel, and his bane,
Whenever that shall be; so fate pronounced.
But thou, O father, I forewarn thee, shun
His deadly arrow; neither vainly hope
To be invulnerable in those bright arms,
Though tempered heavenly; for that mortal dint,[1]
Save he who reigns above, none can resist."

She finished, and the subtle fiend his lore[2]
Soon learned, now milder, and thus answered smooth:
"Dear daughter, since thou claim'st me for thy sire,
And my fair son here show'st me, the dear pledge
Of dalliance had with thee in Heaven, and joys

[1] Stroke. [2] Lesson.

Then sweet, now sad to mention, through dire change
Befallen us unforeseen, unthought of; know
I come no enemy, but to set free
From out this dark and dismal house of pain
Both him and thee, and all the heavenly host
Of spirits, that in our just pretences armed
Fell with us from on high: from them I go
This uncouth errand sole, and, one for all,
Myself expose, with lonely steps to tread
The unsounded deep, and through the void immense
To search with wandering quest a place foretold
Should be, and, by concurring signs, ere now
Created vast and round; a place of bliss
In the purlieus of Heaven, and therein placed
A race of upstart creatures, to supply
Perhaps our vacant room, though more removed,
Lest Heaven, surcharged with potent multitude,
Might hap to move new broils: be this or aught
Than this more secret now designed, I haste
To know, and, this once known, shall soon return,
And bring ye to the place where thou and Death
Shall dwell at ease, and up and down unseen
Wing silently the buxom[1] air, imbalmed
With odours: there ye shall be fed and filled
Immeasurably; all things shall be your prey."
He ceased, for both seemed highly pleased, and Death
Grinned horrible a ghastly smile, to hear
His famine should be filled, and blessed his maw
Destined to that good hour: no less rejoiced
His mother bad, and thus bespake her sire:
"The key of this infernal pit by due,
And by command of Heaven's all-powerful King
I keep, by him forbidden to unlock
These adamantine gates; against all force
Death ready stands to interpose his dart,
Fearless to be o'ermatched by living might.[2]
But what owe I to his commands above
Who hates me, and hath hither thrust me down
Into this gloom of Tartarus profound,
To sit in hateful office here confined,
Inhabitant of Heaven, and heavenly-born,
Here in perpetual agony and pain,

[1] Flexible, yielding. [2] Others read "wight."

With terrors and with clamours compassed round
Of mine own brood, that on my bowels feed?
Thou art my father, thou my author, thou
My being gavest me; whom should I obey
But thee? whom follow? thou wilt bring me soon
To that new world of light and bliss, among
The gods who live at ease,[1] where I shall reign
At thy right hand voluptuous, as beseems
Thy daughter and thy darling, without end."
Thus saying, from her side the fatal key,
Sad instrument of all our woe, she took;
And towards the gate rolling her bestial train,
Forthwith the huge portcullis high up drew,
Which, but herself, not all the Stygian powers
Could once have moved; then in the key hole turns
The intricate wards, and every bolt and bar
Of massy iron or solid rock with ease
Unfastens: on a sudden open fly,
With impetuous recoil and jarring sound
The infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
Harsh thunder, that the lowest bottom shook
Of Erebus. She opened, but to shut
Excelled her power; the gates wide open stood,
That with extended wings a bannered host
Under spread ensigns marching might pass through
With horse and chariots ranked in loose array;
So wide they stood, and like a furnace mouth
Cast forth redounding smoke and ruddy flame
Before their eyes in sudden view appear
The secrets of the hoary deep, a dark
Illimitable ocean, without bound,
Without dimension, where length, breadth, and height,
And time, and place are lost; where eldest Night
And Chaos, ancestors of nature,[2] hold
Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise
Of endless wars, and by confusion stand.
For Hot, Cold, Moist, and Dry, four champions fierce,
Strive here for mastery, and to battle bring

[1] Sin here speaks according to the Epicurean notion of the life of the gods. See Lucret. i. 56, sq. Apul. de Deo Socratis.

[2] All the ancient naturalists, philosophers, and poets, hold that, Chaos was the first principle of all things; and the poets particularly make Night a goddess, and represent Night, or darkness, and Chaos or confusion, as exercising uncontrolled dominion from the begin-

Their embryon atoms; they around the flag
Of each his faction, in their several clans,
Light armed or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift, or slow,
Swarm populous, unnumbered as the sands
Of Barca or Cyrene's[1] torrid soil,
Levied to side with warring winds, and poise[2]
Their lighter wings. To whom these most adhere,
He rules a moment; Chaos umpire sits,
And by decision more embroils the fray
By which he reigns: next him high arbiter
Chance governs all. Into this wild abyss,
The womb of nature, and perhaps her grave,[3]
Of neither sea, nor shore, nor air, nor fire,
But all these in their pregnant causes mixed
Confusedly, and which thus must ever fight,
Unless the almighty Maker them ordain
His dark materials to create more worlds;
Into this wild abyss the wary fiend
Stood on the brink of Hell and looked a while,
Pondering his voyage; for no narrow frith
He had to cross. Nor was his ear less pealed
With noises loud and ruinous (to compare
Great things with small) than when Bellona storms,
With all her battering engines bent to raze
Some capital city; or less than if this frame
Of Heaven were falling, and these elements
In mutiny had from her axle torn

ning. Thus, the pseud-Orpheus, in the beginning of his hymn to Night, addresses her as the mother of the gods and men, and origin of all things.

So, also, Spenser, in imitation of the ancients, F. Q. b. 1, c. 5, st. 22 :—

"O thou most ancient grandmother of all,
More old than Jove," &c.

And our author's system of the universe is, in short, that the empyrean Heaven, and Chaos and darkness, were before the creation—Heaven above, and Chaos beneath; and then, upon the rebellion of the angels, first Hell was formed out of Chaos "stretching far and wide beneath;" and afterwards "Heaven and Earth, another world hanging o'er the realm of Chaos, and won from his dominion." See ver 1002, &c. and 978.—*Newton.*

[1] A city and province of Libya.

[2] *i. e.* give weight or ballast to

[3] Lucret. v. 260. "Omniparens, eadem rerum commune sepulchrum."—*Thyer.*

The stedfast earth. At last his sail-broad vans[1]
He spreads for flight, and in the surging smoke
Uplifted spurns the ground; thence many a league,
As in a cloudy chair, ascending rides
Audacious; but, that seat soon failing, meets
A vast vacuity: all unawares,
Fluttering his pennons vain, plumb down he drops
Ten thousand fathom deep, and to this hour
Down had been falling, had not by ill chance
The strong rebuff of some tumultuous cloud,
Instinct with fire and nitre, hurried him
As many miles aloft: that fury stayed,
Quenched in a boggy Syrtis, neither sea,
Nor good dry land;[2] nigh foundered, on he fares
Treading the crude consistence, half on foot,
Half flying; behoves him now[3] both oar and sail
As when a gryphon[4] through the wilderness
With winged course, o'er hill or moory dale,
Pursues the Arimaspian, who by stealth
Had from his wakeful custody purloined
The guarded gold: so eagerly the fiend
O'er bog, or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare,
With head, hands, wings, or feet, pursues his way,
And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies;
At length a universal hubbub wild
Of stunning sounds and voices all confused,
Borne through the hollow dark, assaults his ear
With loudest vehemence: thither he plies,
Undaunted, to meet there whatever power
Or spirit of the nethermost abyss
Might in that noise reside, of whom to ask
Which way the nearest coast of darkness lies

[1] As the air and water are both fluids, the metaphors taken from the one are often applied to the other, and flying is compared to sailing, and sailing to flying.—*Newton.*

[2] From Lucan, ix. 304.

[3] *i. e.* he now need use.

[4] Gryphons are fabulous creatures, in the upper part like an eagle, in the lower resembling a lion, and are said to guard gold mines. The Arimaspians were a one-eyed people of Scythia, who adorned their hair with gold, Lucan. iii. 280. Herodotus and other authors relate, that there were continual wars between the gryphons and Arimaspians about gold, the gryphons guarding it, and the Arimaspians taking it whenever they had opportunity. See Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. 7, cap 2.—*Newton.*

Bordering on light; when straight behold the throne
Of Chaos, and his dark pavilion spread
Wide on the wasteful deep; with him enthroned
Sat sable-vested Night, eldest of things,
The consort of his reign, and by them stood
Orcus and Ades,[1] and the dreaded name
Of Demogorgon;[2] Rumour next and Chance,
And Tumult and Confusion all embroiled,
And Discord with a thousand various mouths.
To whom Satan turning boldly, thus: "Ye powers
And spirits of this nethermost abyss,
Chaos and ancient Night, I come no spy,
With purpose to explore or to disturb

Orcus is generally by the poets taken for Pluto, as Ades for any dark place. These terms are of a very vague signification, and employed by the ancient poets accordingly. Milton has personized them, and put them in the court of Chaos.—*Richardson.*

[2] There was a notion among the ancients of a certain deity, whose very name they supposed capable of producing the most terrible effects, and which they therefore dreaded to pronounce. This deity is mentioned as of great power in incantations. Thus Erictho is introduced, threatening the infernal powers for being too slow in their obedience, by Lucan, Phar. vi. 744:—

"Yet, am I yet, ye sullen fiends, obeyed?
Or must I call your master to my aid,
At whose dread name the trembling furies quake,
Hell stands abashed, and earth's foundations shake,
Who views the Gorgons with intrepid eyes,
And your inviolable flood defies?"—*Rowe.*

And, likewise, Tiresias, by Statius, Thebaid iv. 514. And Ismen threatens in the same strain in Tasso, Cant. xiii. st. 10:—

"I have not yet forgot for want of use,
What dreadful terms belong this sacred seat,
My tongue (if still your stubborn hearts refuse)
That so much dreaded name can well repeat,
Which heard great Dis cannot himself excuse,
But hither run from his eternal seat."—*Fairfax.*

The name of this deity is Demogorgon, which some think a corruption of Demiurgus; others imagine him to be so called, as being able to look upon the Gorgon, that turned all other spectators to stone; and to this Lucan seems to allude, when he says:—

"— qui Gorgona cernit apertam."

Spenser, too, mentions this infernal deity, F. Q. b. i. cant. 5, st. 22:—

"Which wast begot in Demogorgon's hall,
And saw'st the secrets of the world unmade"

The secrets[1] of your realm, but by constraint
Wandering this darksome desert, as my way
Lies through your spacious empire up to light,
Alone, and without guide, half lost, I seek
What readiest path leads where your gloomy bounds
Confine with Heaven; or if some other place,
From your dominion won, the ethereal king
Possesses lately, thither to arrive
I travel this profound; direct my course;
Directed,[2] no mean recompense it brings
To your behoof, if I that region lost,
All usurpation thence expelled, reduce
To her original darkness and your sway
(Which is my present journey), and once more
Erect the standard there of ancient Night;
Yours be the advantage all, mine the revenge."
Thus Satan; and him thus the Anarch old,
With faltering speech and visage incomposed,
Answered: "I know thee, stranger, who thou art:
That mighty leading angel, who of late
Made head against Heaven's King, though overthrown
I saw and heard, for such a numerous host
Fled not in silence through the frighted deep
With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout,
Confusion worse confounded; and Heaven-gates
Poured out by millions her victorious bands
Pursuing. I upon my frontiers here

and places him, likewise, in the immense abyss with Chaos, B. 4, cant. 2. st. 47:—

"Down in the bottom of the deep abyss,
Where Demogorgon in dull darkness pent,
Far from the view of gods and heaven's bliss,
The hideous Chaos keeps, their dreadful dwelling is:"

and takes notice also of the dreadful effects of his name, B. i. c. 1, st. 37:—

"A bold bad man, that dared to call by name
Great Gorgon, prince of darkness and dead night,
At which Cocytus quakes, and Styx is put to flight."

Well, therefore, might Milton distinguish him by "the dreaded name of Demogorgon:" and "the name of Demogorgon" is as much as to say Demogorgon himself, as in Virgil Æn. vi. 763. *Albanum nomen* is a man of Alba, Æn. xii. 515.—*Newton.*

[1] *i. e.* secret places.

[2] *i. e.* if you direct me, you will reap no little recompense.

Keep residence, if all I can will serve
That little which is left so to defend,
Encroached on still through your intestine broils,
Weakening the sceptre of old Night: first Hell,
Your dungeon, stretching far and wide beneath;
Now lately Heaven and Earth, another world,
Hung o'er my realm, linked in a golden chain [1]
To that side Heaven from whence your legions fell:
If that way be your walk, you have not far;
So much the nearer danger; go and speed;
Havoc, and spoil, and ruin, are my gain."
He ceased; and Satan stayed not to reply,
But glad that now his sea should find a shore,
With fresh alacrity and force renewed
Springs upward, like a pyramid of fire,
Into the wild expanse, and through the shock
Of fighting elements, on all sides round
Environed, wins his way, harder beset
And more endangered, than when Argo [2] passed
Through Bosphorus betwixt the justling rocks;
Or when Ulysses [3] on the larboard shunned

[1] An idea taken from Homer, Il. viii.

[2] The first long ship ever seen in Greece, in which Jason and his companions sailed to Colchis to fetch the golden fleece. "Through Bosphorus," the Thracian Bosphorus, or the Straits of Constantinople, or the channel of the Black Sea. "Betwixt the justling rocks," two rocks at the entrance into the Euxine, or Black Sea, called in Greek, "symplegades," and by Juvenal, "concurrentia saxa," Sat. xv. 19, which Milton very well translates "the justling rocks," because they were so near, that, a distance, they seemed to open and shut again, and justle one another, as the ship varied its course this way and that as usual.—*Newton.*

[3] These two verses Bentley would throw quite away. "Larboard," (he says) is abominable in heroic poetry; but Dryden (as the doctor owns) thought it not unfit to be employed there; and Milton in other places has used nautical terms, without being censured for it. So in ix. 513, he speaks of "working a ship," of "veering and shifting;" and in i. 207, of "mooring under the lee." But he has also two very formidable objections against the sense of these verses. First, he says that larboard, or left hand, is a mistake here for starboard, or right hand, Charybdis being to the starboard of Ulysses when he sailed through these straits. This is true, but it does not affect what Milton here says; for the sense may be, not that Ulysses shunned Charybdis situated on the larboard of his ship as he was sailing; but that Ulysses sailing on the larboard (to the left hand where Scylla was) did thereby shun Charybdis; which was the truth of the case. His other objection is, that Scylla was no whirlpool, which yet she is

Charybdis, and by the other whirlpool steered
So he with difficulty and labour hard
Moved on, with difficulty and labour he;
But he once passed, soon after, when man fell,
Strange alteration! Sin and Death amain
Following his track (such was the will of Heaven),
Paved after him a broad and beaten way
Over the dark abyss, whose boiling gulf
Tamely endured a bridge of wondrous length
From Hell continued, reaching the utmost orb
Of this frail world, by which the spirits perverse
With easy intercourse pass to and fro
To tempt or punish mortals, except whom
God and good angels guard by special grace
But now at last the sacred influence
Of light appears, and from the walls of Heaven
Shoots far into the bosom of dim Night
A glimmering dawn; here Nature first begins
Her farthest verge, and Chaos to retire,
As from her outmost works, a broken foe,
With tumult less, and with less hostile din,
That Satan with less toil, and now with ease,
Wafts on the calmer wave by dubious light,
And like a weather-beaten vessel holds
Gladly the port, though shrouds and tackle torn;
Or in the emptier waste, resembling air,
Weighs his spread wings, at leisure to behold
Far off the empyreal Heaven, extended wide
In circuit, undetermined square or round,
With opal towers and battlements adorned
Of living sapphire, once his native seat;
And fast by, hanging in a golden chain,

here supposed to have been. But Virgil (whom Milton follows oftener than he does Homer) describes Scylla as "naves in saxa trahentem," Æn. iii. 425, and what is that less than calling it a whirlpool? And Kircher, who has written a particular account of Scylla and Charybdis upon his own view of them, does not scruple to call them both whirlpools. The truth is, that Scylla is a rock situated in a small bay on the Italian coast, into which bay the tide runs with a very strong current, so as to draw in the ships which are within the compass of its force, and either dash them against the rock, or swallow them in the eddies; for when the streams have thus violently rushed into the bay, they meet with the rock Scylla at the further end, and being beat back, must, therefore, form an eddy or whirlpool.—*Pearce*

This pendent world,[1] in bigness as a star
Of smallest magnitude close by the moon.
Thither, full fraught with mischievous revenge,
Accursed, and in a curséd hour, he hies

[1] By "this pendent world" is not meant the earth; but the new creation, Heaven and Earth, the whole orb of fixed stars immensely bigger than the earth, a mere point in comparison. This is sure from what Chaos had lately said:—

"Now lately Heaven and Earth, another world,
Hung o'er my realm, linked in a golden chain."

Besides, Satan did not see the Earth yet; he was afterwards surprised "at the sudden view of all this world at once," iii. 542, and wandered long on the outside of it; till at last he saw our sun, and learned there of the archangel Uriel where the Earth and Paradise were. See iii. 722. "This pendent world," therefore, must mean the whole world, the new created universe, and "beheld far off" it appeared in comparison with the empyreal Heaven no bigger than "a star of smallest magnitude;" nay, not so large; it appeared no bigger than such a star appears to be when it is "close by the moon," the superior light whereof makes any star that happens to be near her disk, to seem exceedingly small and almost disappear.—*Newton*

END OF THE SECOND BOOK

BOOK III.

THE ARGUMENT.

God, sitting on his throne, sees Satan flying towards this world, then newly created; shows him to the Son, who sat at his right hand; foretells the success of Satan in perverting mankind; clears his own justice and wisdom from all imputation, having created Man free and able enough to have withstood his tempter; yet declares his purpose of grace towards him, in regard he fell not of his own malice, as did Satan, but by him seduced. The Son of God renders praises to his Father for the manifestation of his gracious purpose towards man; but God again declares that grace cannot be extended towards man without the satisfaction of divine justice; man hath offended the majesty of God by aspiring to godhead, and therefore with all his progeny devoted to death must die, unless some one can be found sufficient to answer for his offence, and undergo his punishment. The Son of God freely offers himself a ransom for man; the Father accepts him, ordains his incarnation, pronounces his exaltation above all names in Heaven and Earth; commands all the angels to adore him; they obey, and hymning to their harps in full quire, celebrate the Father and the Son. Meanwile Satan alights upon the bare convex of this world's outermost orb; where wandering he first finds a place, since called the Limbo of Vanity; what persons and things fly up thither; thence comes to the gate of Heaven, described ascending by stairs, and the waters above the firmament that flow about it: his passage thence to the orb of the sun; he finds there Uriel, the regent of that orb, but first changes himself into the shape of a meaner angel; and pretending a zealous desire to behold the new creation, and man whom God had placed here, inquires of him the place of his habitation, and is directed; alights first on Mount Niphates.

HAIL, holy Light! offspring of Heaven firstborn,
Or of the Eternal coëternal beam,
May I express thee unblamed? since God is light,[1]
And never but in unapproachéd light
Dwelt from eternity, dwelt then in thee,
Bright effluence of bright essence increate.

[1] 1 John, i. 5; 1 Tim. vi. 16.

Or hear'st thou[1] rather pure ethereal stream,
Whose fountain who shall tell? before the sun,
Before the Heaven thou wert; and at the voice
Of God, as with a mantle didst invest
The rising world of waters dark and deep,[2]
Won from the void[3] and formless infinite.
Thee I revisit now with bolder wing,
Escaped the Stygian pool, though long detained
In that obscure sojourn, while in my flight
Through utter and through middle[4] darkness borne
With other notes than to the Orphéan lyre
I sung of Chaos[5] and eternal Night;
Taught by the heavenly muse to venture down
The dark descent, and up to re-ascend,
Though hard and rare: thee I revisit safe,
And feel thy sovereign vital lamp; but thou
Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain
To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;
So thick a drop serene[6] hath quenched their orbs,

[1] Or dost thou rather hear this address, dost thou delight rather to be called "pure ethereal stream?" An excellent Latinism, as Dr. Bentley observes, Hor. Sat. II. vi. 20:—

"Matutine pater seu Jane libentius audis?"

And we have an expression of the same kind in Spenser, Faërie Queen, b. i., c. v., st. 23:—

"If old Aveugle's sons so evil hear." —*Newton.*

[2] For the world was only in a state of fluidity, when the light was created; as Moses says, "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters; and God said, Let there be light, and there was light," Gen. i. 2, 3. And this verse is plainly formed upon this of Spenser, Faërie Queen, b. i., c. i., st. 39:—

"And through the world of waters wide and deep."
—*Newton.*

[3] "Void" must not here be understood as emptiness, for Chaos is described full of matter; but "void," as destitute of any formed being, void as the earth was when first created.—*Richardson*

[4] *i. e.* the great gulf between Hell and Heaven.

[5] Apollonius, Rh. i. 493, represents Orpheus making the creation out of Chaos the subject of his muse.

[6] "Drop serene," or gutta serena. It was formerly thought that that sort of blindess was an incurable extinction or quenching of sight by a transparent, watery, cold humour, distilling upon the optic nerve, though making very little change in the eye to appearance, if any; 'tis now known to be most commonly an obstruction in the capillary vessels of that nerve, and curable in some cases. When Milton was first blind, he wrote to his friend Leonard Philara, an

Or dim suffusion veiled. Yet not the more[1]
Cease I to wander, where the Muses haunt
Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,
Smit with the love of sacred song; but chief
Thee, Sion, and the flowery brooks[2] beneath,
That wash thy hallowed feet, and warbling flow,
Nightly I visit: nor sometimes forget[3]
Those other two equalled with me in fate,
So were I equalled with them in renown,
Blind Thamyris[4] and blind Mæonides,[5]
And Tiresias[6] and Phineas,[7] prophets old.
Then feed on thoughts, that voluntary move
Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful bird
Sings darkling,[8] and in shadiest covert hid
Tunes her nocturnal note. Thus with the year
Seasons return, but not to me returns
Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn,
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;
But cloud instead, and ever-during dark
Surrounds me; from the cheerful ways of men
Cut off, and for the book of knowledge fair
Presented with a universal blank[9]

Athenian then at Paris, for him to consult Dr Thevenot; he sent his case ('tis in the 15th of his familiar letters): what answer he had is not known; but it seems by this passage that he was not certain what his disease was; or perhaps he had a mind to describe both the great causes of blindness according to what was known at that time, as his whole poem is interspersed with great variety of learning.—*Richardson.*

[1] *i. e.* yet on that account I do not cease.

[2] Kedron and Siloah.

[3] *i. e.* and sometimes not forget.

[4] Thamyris is an early bard mentioned by Homer, Il. ii. 595.

[5] Homer.

[6] A Theban soothsayer.

[7] A king of Arcadia.

[8] This word was said to have been coined by Milton, but it is also used by Shakspeare.

[9] Dr. Bentley reads "all nature's map, &c.," because (he says) "a blank of works" is an unphilosophical expression. If so, and if the sentence must terminate at "blank," why may we not read—

"Presented with an universal blank;
All nature's works to me expunged and rased,"

that is, all nature's works being, in respect to the "universal blank," or absence of light from me, expunged to me and rased.—*Pearce.*

Of nature's works to me expunged and rased,
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.
So much the rather thou, celestial *Light*,
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
Irradiate; there plant eyes, all mist from thence
Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight.
Now had the Almighty Father from above,[1]
From the pure empyrean where he sits
High throned above all height, bent down his eye,
His own works and their works at once to view:
About him all the sanctities of Heaven
Stood thick as stars, and from his sight received
Beatitude past utterance; on his right
The radiant image of his glory sat,
His only Son; on earth he first beheld
Our two first parents, yet the only two
Of mankind, in the happy garden placed,
Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love,
Uninterrupted joy, unrivalled love,
In blissful solitude; he then surveyed
Hell and the gulf between, and Satan there
Coasting the wall of Heaven on this side Night,
In the dun air sublime, and ready now
To stoop with wearied wings and willing feet
On the bare outside of this world, that seemed
Firm land embosomed, without firmament,
Uncertain which, in ocean or in air.
Him God beholding from his prospect high,
Wherein past, present, future, he beholds,
Thus to his only Son foreseeing spake:
"Only begotten Son, seest thou what rage
Transports our adversary? whom no bounds
Prescribed, no bars of Hell, nor all the chains
Heaped on him there, nor yet the main abyss

Compare Tasso, i. 7:—

"When God Almighty from his lofty throne,
Set in those parts of Heaven that purest are
(As far above the clear stars every one,
As it is hence up to the highest star),
Looked down, and all at once this world beheld,
Each land, each city, country, town, and field."
—*Fairfax. Thyer.*

Wide interrupt,[1] can hold; so bent he seems
On desperate revenge, that shall redound
Upon his own rebellious head. And now
Through all restraint broke loose he wings his way
Not far off Heaven, in the precincts of light,
Directly towards the new-created world,
And man there placed, with purpose to essay
If him by force he can destroy, or worse,
By some false guile pervert; and shall pervert,
For man will hearken to his glozing lies,
And easily transgress the sole command,
Sole pledge of his obedience: so will fall,
He and his faithless progeny: whose fault?
Whose but his own? Ingrate, he had of me
All he could have: I made him just and right,
Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.
Such I created all the ethereal powers
And spirits, both them who stood, and them who failed;[2]
Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.
Not free, what proof could they have given sincere
Of true allegiance, constant faith or love,
Where only what they needs must do appeared,
Not what they would? what praise could they receive?
What pleasure I from such obedience paid,
When will and reason (reason also is choice)
Useless and vain, of freedom both despoiled,
Made passive both, had served necessity,
Not me? They therefore as to right belonged,
So were created, nor can justly accuse
Their Maker, or their making, or their fate,
As if predestination over-ruled
Their will, disposed by absolute decree
Or high foreknowledge; they themselves decreed
Their own revolt, not I; if[3] I foreknew,
Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,
Which had no less proved certain unforeknown.
So without least impulse or shadow of fate,
Or aught by me immutably foreseen,[4]

[1] Broken.

Read "fell," with Bentley, to preserve the antithesis.

[3] *i. e.* though; for he expresses no doubt on the subject.

[4] To "foresee immutably" (says Dr. Bentley) are two ideas that cannot unite: he thinks, therefore, that Milton must have given it

They trespass, authors to themselves in all,
Both what they judge and what they choose; for so
I formed them free, and free they must remain,
Till they enthral themselves; I else must change
Their nature, and revoke the high decree
Unchangeable, eternal, which ordained
Their freedom: they themselves ordained their fall.
The first sort by their own suggestion fell,
Self tempted, self-depraved: man falls deceived
By the other first; man therefore shall find grace,
The other none: in mercy and justice both,
Through Heaven and earth, so shall my glory excel;
But mercy, first and last, shall brightest shine."
Thus while God spake ambrosial fragrance filled
All Heaven, and in the blessed spirits elect
Sense of new joy ineffable diffused:
Beyond compare the Son of God was seen
Most glorious; in him all his Father shone
Substantially expressed;[1] and in his face
Divine compassion visibly appeared,
Love without end, and without measure grace,
Which uttering thus he to his Father spake:
"O Father, gracious was that word which closed
Thy sovereign sentence, that man should find grace;
For which both Heaven and earth shall high extol
Thy praises, with the innumerable sound[2]
Of hymns and sacred songs, wherewith thy throne
Encompassed shall resound thee ever blest.
For should man finally be lost, should man,
Thy creature late so loved, thy youngest son,
Fall circumvented thus by fraud, though joined
With his own folly? that be from thee far,
That far be from thee, Father, who art judge
Of all things made, and judgest only right.
Or shall the adversary thus obtain

"immutably foredoomed." His objection is right, but his emendation is wrong, I think. Milton seems rather to have dictated—

"Or aught by me 'immutable' foreseen,"

where "aught immutable" may signify any event that cannot be changed or altered.—*Pearce.*

"Immutably foreseen" seems to mean so foreseen as to be immutable.—*Newton.*

[1] Cf. Heb. i. 3.

[2] Compare i. 101, "innumerable force of spirits

His end, and frustrate thine? shall he fulfil
His malice, and thy goodness bring to nought,
Or proud return, though to his heavier doom,
Yet with revenge accomplished, and to Hell
Draw after him the whole race of mankind,
By him corrupted? or wilt thou thyself
Abolish thy creation, and unmake
For him, what for thy glory thou hast made?
So should thy goodness and thy greatness both
Be questioned and blasphemed without defence.'
To whom the great Creator thus replied:
"O Son, in whom my soul hath chief delight,
Son of my bosom, Son who art alone
My word, my wisdom, and effectual might,
All hast thou spoken as my thoughts are, all
As my eternal purpose hath decreed:
Man shall not quite be lost, but saved who will,
Yet not of will in him, but grace in me
Freely vouchsafed; once more I will renew
His lapsed powers, though forfeit and enthralled
By sin to foul exorbitant desires;
Upheld by me, yet once more he shall stand
On even ground against his mortal foe,
By me upheld, that he may know how frail
His fallen condition is, and to me owe
All his deliverance, and to none but me.
Some I have chosen of peculiar grace[1]
Elect above the rest; so is my will:
The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warned
Their sinful state, and to appease betimes
The incensed Deity, while offered grace
Invites; for I will clear their senses dark,
What may suffice, and soften stony hearts
To pray, repent, and bring obedience due,
To prayer, repentance, and obedience due,
Though but endeavoured with sincere intent,
Mine ear shall not be slow, mine eye not shut.
And I will place within them as a guide
My umpire Conscience, whom if they will hear,

[1] Our author did not hold the doctrine of rigid predestination: he was of the sentiments of the more moderate Calvinists, and thought that some indeed were elected of peculiar grace, the rest might be saved complying with the terms and conditions of the Gospel.—*Newton.*

Light after light well used they shall attain,
And to the end persisting, safe arrive.
This my long sufferance and my day of grace.[1]
They who neglect and scorn shall never taste;
But hard be hardened, blind be blinded more,
That they may stumble on, and deeper fall,
And none but such from mercy I exclude
But yet all is not done: man disobeying,
Disloyal breaks his feälty, and sins
Against the high supremacy of Heaven,
Affecting godhead, and so losing all,
To expiate his treason hath nought left,
But to destruction sacred and devote,
He with his whole posterity must die.
Die he or justice must; unless for him
Some other able, and as willing, pay
The rigid satisfaction—death for death.
Say, heavenly powers, where shall we find such love?
Which of ye will be mortal to redeem
Man's mortal crime, and just the unjust to save?
Dwells in all Heaven charity so dear?"
He asked; but all the heavenly quire stood mute,
And silence was in Heaven: on man's behalf
Patron or intercessor none appeared,
Much less that durst upon his own head draw
The deadly forfeiture, and ransom set.
And now without redemption all mankind
Must have been lost, adjudged to death and Hell
By doom severe, had not the Son of God,
In whom the fullness dwells of love divine,
His dearest mediation thus renewed:
"Father, thy word is past, man shall find grace,
And shall grace not find means, that finds her way,
The speediest of thy winged messengers,
To visit all thy creatures, and to all
Comes unprevented,[2] unimplored, unsought?

[1] It is a great pity that our author should have thus debased the dignity of the Deity by putting in his mouth this horrid doctrine of a day of grace, after which it is not possible for a man to repent; and there can be no sort of excuse for him, except the candid reader will make some allowance for the prejudices which he might possibly receive from the gloomy divinity of that enthusiastic age in which he lived.—*Thyer.*

[2] *i. e.* unanticipated, from *prevenire*, to come before. Cf. Ps. lxxxviii. 13. The word is commonly so used in our Articles and Liturgy.

Happy for man, so coming; he her aid
Can never seek, once dead in sins and lost
Atonement for himself or offering meet,
Indebted and undone, hath none to bring.
Behold me then; me for him, life for life,
I offer; on me let thine anger fall;
Account me man; I for his sake will leave
Thy bosom, and this glory next to thee
Freely put off, and for him lastly die
Well pleased; on me let Death wreak all his rage.
Under his gloomy power I shall not long
Lie vanquished; thou hast given me to possess
Life in myself for ever; by thee I live,
Though now to Death I yield, and am his due
All that of me can die; yet that debt paid,
Thou wilt not leave me in the loathsome grave
His prey, nor suffer my unspotted soul
For ever with corruption there to dwell;[1]
But I shall rise victorious, and subdue
My vanquisher, spoiled of his vaunted spoil,
Death his death's wound shall then receive, and stoop
Inglorious, of his mortal sting disarmed.
I through the ample air in triumph high
Shall lead Hell captive, maugre Hell, and show
The powers of darkness bound. Thou at the sight
Pleased, out of Heaven shalt look down and smile,
While by thee raised I ruin all my foes,
Death last, and with his carcass glut the grave
Then with the multitude of my redeemed
Shall enter Heaven, long absent, and return,
Father, to see thy face, wherein no cloud
Of anger shall remain, but peace assured
And reconcilement; wrath shall be no more
Thenceforth, but in thy presence joy entire."
His words here ended, but his meek aspect
Silent yet spake, and breathed immortal love
To mortal men, above which only shone
Filial obedience; as a sacrifice
Glad to be offered,[2] he attends the will
Of his great Father. Admiration seized
All Heaven, what this might mean, and whither tend,
Wondering; but soon the Almighty thus replied:

[1] Cf. Ps. xvi. 10, Acts ii. 20, sq. [2] Alluding to Ps. xl. 6.

"O thou, in Heaven and earth the only peace
Found out for mankind under wrath, O thou
My soul complacence! well thou know'st how dear
To me are all my works, nor man the least,
Though last created; that for him I spare
Thee from my bosom and right hand, to save,
By losing thee awhile, the whole race lost.
Thou therefore, whom thou only canst redeem,
Their nature also to thy nature join;
And be thyself man among men on earth,
Made flesh, when time shall be, of virgin seed,
By wondrous birth: be thou in Adam's room
The head of all mankind, though Adam's son
As in him perish all men, so in thee,
As from a second root, shall be restored
As many as are restored, without thee none
His crime makes guilty all his sons thy merit
Imputed shall absolve them who renounce
Their own both righteous and unrighteous deeds,
And live in thee transplanted, and from thee
Receive new life. So man, as is most just,
Shall satisfy for man, be judged and die,
And dying rise, and rising with him raise
His brethren, ransomed with his own dear life
So heavenly love shall outdo hellish hate,
Giving to death, and dying to redeem,[1]
So dearly to redeem what hellish hate
So easily destroyed, and still destroys
In those who, when they may, accept not grace
Nor shalt thou, by descending to assume
Man's nature, lessen or degrade thine own

[1] The love of the Father in giving the Son to death, and the love of the Son in submitting to it and dying to redeem mankind. Mr. Warburton thus explains it:—"Milton's system of divinity taught," says he, "not only that man was redeemed, but likewise that a real price was paid for his redemption; 'dying to redeem,' therefore, signifying only redemption in a vague uncertain sense, but imperfectly represents his system; so imperfectly that it may as well be cause the Socinian; the price paid (which implies a proper redemption) is wanting. But to pay a price implying a voluntary act, the poet therefore well expresses it by 'giving to death;' that is, giving himself to death; so that the sense of the line fully expresses Milton's notion, 'Heavenly love gave a price for the redemption of mankind, and by virtue of that price really redeemed them.'"—*Newton.*

Because thou hast, though throned on highest bliss
Equal to God, and equally enjoying
God-like fruition, quitted all to save
A world from utter loss, and hast been found
By merit more than birthright Son of God,
Found worthiest to be so by being good,
Far more than great or high, because in thee
Love hath abounded more than glory abounds,
Therefore thy humiliation shall exalt
With thee thy manhood also to this throne,
Here shalt thou sit incarnate, here shalt reign
Both God and Man, Son both of God and Man,
Anointed universal King; all power
I give thee; reign for ever, and assume
Thy merits; under thee as head supreme
Thrones, princedoms, powers, dominions I reduce:
All knees to thee shall bow, of them that bide
In Heaven, or earth, or under earth in Hell.
When thou, attended gloriously from Heaven,
Shalt in the sky appear, and from thee send
The summoning archangels to proclaim
Thy dread tribunal; forthwith from all winds
The living, and forthwith the cited dead
Of all past ages, to the general doom
Shall hasten, such a peal shall rouse their sleep
Then, all thy saints assembled, thou shalt judge
Bad men and angels; they arraigned shall sink
Beneath thy sentence; Hell, her numbers full,
Thenceforth shall be for ever shut. Meanwhile
The world shall burn, and from her ashes spring
New Heaven and earth, wherein the just shall dwell,
And after all their tribulations long
See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,
With joy and love triumphing, and fair truth.
Then thou thy regal sceptre shalt lay by,
For regal sceptre then no more shall need,
God shall be all in all. But, all ye gods,[1]
Adore him, who to compass all this dies;
Adore the Son, and honour him as me."
No sooner had the Almighty ceased, but all
The multitude of angels, with a shout

[1] From Ps. xcvii., "Worship him, all ye gods," which St. Paul (Heb. i. 6) expresses by "all the angels of God."

Loud as from numbers without number, sweet
As from blest voices uttering joy, Heaven rung
With jubilee, and loud Hosannas filled
The eternal regions: lowly reverent
Towards either throne they bow, and to the ground
With solemn adoration down they cast[1]
Their crowns enwove with amarant and gold,
Immortal amarant,[2] a flower which once
In Paradise, fast by the tree of life,
Began to bloom; but soon for man's offence
To Heaven removed, where first it grew, there grows,
And flowers aloft shading the fount of life,
And where the river of bliss through midst of Heaven
Rolls o'er[3] Elysian flowers her amber stream;
With these, that never fade, the spirits elect
Bind their resplendent locks enwreathed with beams
Now in loose garlands thick thrown off, the bright
Pavement, that like a sea of jasper shone,
Empurpled with celestial roses, smiled.[4]
Then, crowned again, their golden harps they took,
Harps ever tuned, that glittering by their side
Like quivers hung, and with preämble sweet

[1] Rev. iv. 10.

[2] "Amarant," Αμαραντος, Greek, for unfading, that decayeth not; a flower of a purple velvet colour, which, though gathered, keeps its beauty, and when all other flowers fade, recovers its lustre by being sprinkled with a little water, as Pliny affirms, lib. xxi., c. 11. Our author seems to have taken this hint from 1 Pet. i. 4, "To an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away," αμαραντον; and 1 Pet. v. 4, "Ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away," αμαραντινον, both relating to the name of his everlasting "amarant," which he has finely set near the tree of life. "Amarantus flos, symbolum est immortalitatis."—*Clem. Alexand. Hume.*

[3] We frequently see grass, and weeds, and flowers, growing under water; and we may therefore suppose the finest flowers to grow at the bottom of the "river of bliss," or rather the river to "roll over" them sometimes, to water them. The author seems to intend much the same thing that he has expressed in iv. 240, where, speaking of the brooks in Paradise, he says, they—

"Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed
Flowers worthy of Paradise."

And as there they are flowers "worthy of Paradise," so here they are worthy of "Elysium," the region of the blessed.—*Newton*

[4] Cf. Spenser, F. Q. iii. 7, 16:—

"Whose sides impurpled were with smiling red."

Of charming symphony they introduce
Their sacred song, and waken raptures high;
No voice exempt, no voice but well could join
Melodious part, such concord is in Heaven.
"Thee, Father," first they sung, "Omnipotent,
Immutable, Immortal, Infinite,
Eternal King: thee, Author of all being,
Fountain of light, thyself invisible
Amidst the glorious brightness where thou sitt'st
Throned inaccessible, but[1] when thou shad'st
The full blaze of thy beams, and through a cloud
Drawn round about thee like a radiant shrine,
Dark with excessive bright[2] thy skirts appear,
Yet dazzle Heaven, that brightest seraphim
Approach not, but with both wings veil their eyes.[3]
Thee," next they sang, "of all creation first,
Begotten Son, Divine Similitude,
In whose conspicuous count'nance, without cloud
Made visible, the Almighty Father shines,
Whom else no creature can behold;[4] on thee
Impressed the effulgence of his glory abides,
Transfused on thee his ample Spirit rests.
He Heaven of Heavens, and all the powers therein
By thee created, and by thee threw down
The aspiring dominations: thou that day
Thy Father's dreadful thunder didst not spare,
Nor stop thy flaming chariot wheels, that shook
Heaven's everlasting frame, while o'er the necks
Thou drov'st of warring angels disarrayed.
Back from pursuit thy powers with loud acclaim

[1] *i. e.* except.

[2] Milton has the same thought of darkness occasioned by glory v. 599, "Brightness had made invisible." This also explains his meaning here; the excess of brightness had the effect of darkness, invisibility. What an idea of glory! the skirts only not to be looked on by the beings nearest to God, but when doubly or trebly shaded by a cloud and both wings. What, then, is the full blaze?—*Richardson.*

The same thought in Spenser's hymn of Heavenly Beauty, but more languidly expressed:—

"With the great glory of that wondrous light,
His throne is all encompassèd around,
And hid in his own brightness from the sight
Of all that look thereon," &c. —*Thyer.*

[3] Cf. Is. vi. 2.

[4] John i. 18, xiv. 9.

Thee only[1] extolled, Son of thy Father's might,
To execute fierce vengeance on his foes,
Not so on man: him, through their malice fallen,
Father of mercy and grace, thou didst not doom
So strictly, but much more to pity incline:
No sooner did thy dear and only Son
Perceive thee purposed not to doom frail man
So strictly, but much more to pity inclined,
He,[2] to appease thy wrath, and end the strife
Of mercy and justice in thy face discerned,
Regardless of the bliss wherein he sat
Second to thee, offered himself to die
For man's offence. O unexampled love,
Love no where to be found less than Divine!
Hail, Son of God, Saviour of men! thy name
Shall be the copious matter of my song
Henceforth, and never shall my harp thy praise
Forget, nor from thy Father's praise disjoin."
Thus they in Heaven, above the starry sphere,
Their happy hours in joy and hymning spent.
Meanwhile upon the firm opacous globe[3]
Of this round world, whose first convex divides
The luminous inferior orbs inclosed
From Chaos and the inroad of Darkness old,
Satan alighted walks: a globe far off
It seemed, now seems a boundless continent,
Dark, waste, and wild, under the frown of night
Starless exposed, and ever-threatening storms
Of Chaos blustering round, inclement sky;
Save on that side which from the wall of Heaven,
Though distant far, some small reflection gains
Of glimmering air less vexed with tempest loud.
Here walked the fiend at large in spacious field.
As when a vulture on Imaus[4] bred,

[1] *i. e.* thee, and thee only.

[2] Supply "than" or "but" before "he."

[3] Satan's walk upon the outside of the universe, which at a distance appeared to him of a globular form, but upon his nearer approach looked like an unbounded plain, is natural and noble: as his roaming upon the frontiers of the creation, between that mass of matter which was wrought into a world, and that shapeless, unformed heap of materials which still lay in chaos and confusion, strikes the imagination with something astonishingly great and wild.—*Addison.*

[4] Imaus is a celebrated mountain in Asia; its name signifies "snowy," in the language of the inhabitants, according to Pliny,

Whose snowy ridge the roving Tartar bounds,
Dislodging from a region scarce of prey
To gorge the flesh of lambs or yeanling kids
On hills where flocks are fed, flies toward the springs
Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams;
But in his way lights on the barren plains
Of Sericana, where Chineses drive
With sails and wind their cany waggons light;
So on this windy sea of land, the fiend
Walked up and down alone, bent on his prey,
Alone, for other creature in this place
Living or lifeless to be found was none;
None yet, but store hereafter from the earth
Up hither like aërial vapours flew
Of all things transitory and vain, when sin
With vanity had filled the works of men;
Both all things vain, and all who in vain things
Built their fond hopes of glory or lasting fame,
Or happiness in this or the other life;
All who have their reward on earth, the fruits
Of painful superstition and blind zeal,
Nought seeking but the praise of men, here find
Fit retribution, empty as their deeds;
All th' unaccomplished works of Nature's hand,
Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mixed,
Dissolved on earth, fleet hither, and in vain,
Till final dissolution, wander here,
Not in the neighbouring moon,[1] as some have dreamed
Those argent fields more likely habitants,
Translated saints, or middle spirits, hold,

lib. vi. cap. 21, "incolarum lingua nivosum significante;" and therefore it is said here, "whose snowy ridge." It is the boundary to the east of the Western Tartars, who are called "roving," as they live chiefly in tents, and remove from place to place for the convenience of pasturage, their herds of cattle and what they take in hunting being their principal subsistence. Ganges and Hydaspes are famous rivers of India; and Serica is a region betwixt China to the east, and the mountain Imaus to the west; and what our author here says of the Chinese he seems to have taken from Heylin's Cosmography, p. 867, where it is said, "Agreeable unto the observation of modern writers, the country is so plain and level that they have carts and coaches driven with sails, as ordinarily as drawn with horses, in these parts." —*Newton.*

[1] Ariosto particularly, in his "Orlando Furioso," cant. 34, st. 70, &c.

Betwixt the angelical and human kind.
Hither of ill-joined sons and daughters born
First from the ancient world those giants came
With many a vain exploit, though then renowned:
The builders next of Babel on the plain
Of Sennaar,[1] and still with vain design
New Babels, had they wherewithal, would build:
Others came single; he who to be deemed
A god, leaped fondly into Ætna flames,
Empedocles;[2] and he who to enjoy
Plato's Elysium, leaped into the sea,
Cleombrotus;[3] and many more too long,
Embryos and idiots, eremites and friars,
White, black, and gray, with all their trumpery
Here pilgrims roam, that strayed so far to seek
In Golgotha him dead, who lives in Heaven;[4]
And they who to be sure of Paradise
Dying put on the weeds of Dominic,
Or in Franciscan think to pass disguised;
They pass the planets seven,[5] and pass the fixed,
And that crystalline sphere whose balance weighs
The trepidation talked, and that first moved,

Shinar.

[2] The scholar of Pythagoras, a philosopher and poet, born at Agrigentum, in Sicily: he wrote of the nature of things in Greek, as Lucretius did in Latin verse. He, stealing one night from his followers, threw himself into the flaming Ætna, that being nowhere to be found he might be esteemed to be a god, and to be taken up into Heaven; but his iron pattens, being thrown out by the fury of the burning mountain, discovered his defeated ambition, and ridiculed his folly. Hor. de Art. Poet. 464:—

> "Deus immortalis haberi
> Dum cupit Empedocles, ardentem frigidus Ætnam
> Insiluit." —*Hume.*

[3] The name is rightly placed the last word in the sentence, as "Empedocles" was before. He was called Ambraciota of Ambracia, a city of Epirus in Greece. Having read over Plato's book of the "Soul's Immortality and Happiness in another Life," he was so ravished with the account of it that he leaped from a high wall into the sea, that he might immediately enjoy it.—*Newton.*

[4] An allusion to Luke xxiv. 5 sq.

[5] He speaks here according to the ancient astronomy, adopted and improved by Ptolemy. "They pass the planets seven," our planetary or solar system, "and" beyond this "pass the fixed," the firmament or sphere of the fixed stars; "and" beyond this "that crystalline sphere," the crystalline Heaven, clear as crystal, to which the Ptole-

And now Saint Peter at Heaven's wicket seems
To wait them with his keys, and now at foot
Of Heaven's ascent they lift their feet, when lo!
A violent cross wind from either coast
Blows them transverse ten thousand leagues awry
Into the devious air; then might ye see
Cowls, hoods, and habits with their wearers tost
And fluttered into rags; then relics, beads,
Indulgences, dispenses, pardons, bulls,
The sport of winds: all these upwhirled aloft
Fly o'er the backside of the world far off
Into a limbo large and broad, since called
The Paradise of Fools, to few unknown
Long after, now unpeopled, and untrod
All this dark globe the fiend found as he passed,
And long he wandered, till at last a gleam
Of dawning light turned thitherward in haste
His travelled[1] steps; far distant he descries,
Ascending by degrees magnificent
Up to the wall of Heaven, a structure high,
At top whereof, but far more rich, appeared
The work as of a kingly palace gate,
With frontispiece of diamond and gold
Embellished; thick with sparkling orient gems
The portal shone, inimitable on earth
By model, or by shading pencil drawn.
The stairs were such as whereon Jacob saw
Angels ascending and descending, bands
Of guardians bright, when he from Esau fled
To Padan-Aram, in the field of Luz,
Dreaming by night under the open sky,
And waking cried, 'This is the gate of Heaven.'
Each stair mysteriously was meant, nor stood
There always, but drawn up to Heaven sometimes
Viewless; and underneath a bright sea flowed
Of jasper, or of liquid pearl, whereon
Who after came from earth, sailing arrived,

maics attributed a sort of libration, or shaking (the "trepidation" so much talked of), to account for certain irregularities in the motion of the stars; "and" beyond this "that first moved," the *primum mobile*, the sphere which was both the first moved and the first mover, communicating its motions to all the lower spheres; and beyond this was the empyrean Heaven.—*Newton.*

[1] Tired, wearied.

Wafted by angels, or flew o'er the lake
Rapt in a chariot drawn by fiery steeds.
The stairs were then let down, whether to dare
The fiend by easy ascent, or aggravate
His sad exclusion from the doors of bliss.
Direct against which opened from beneath,
Just o'er the blissful seat of Paradise,
A passage down to the earth, a passage wide,
Wider by far than that of after times
Over Mount Zion, and, though that were large,
Over the promised land to God so dear,
By which, to visit oft those happy tribes,
On high behests his angels to and fro
Passed frequent, and his eye with choice regard
From Paneas,[1] the fount of Jordan's flood,
To Beërsaba, where the Holy Land
Borders on Egypt and the Arabian shore;
So wide the opening seemed, where bounds were set
To darkness, such as bound the ocean wave.
Satan from hence, now on the lower stair,
That scaled by steps of gold to Heaven-gate,
Looks down with wonder at the sudden view
Of all this world at once. As when a scout
Through dark and desert ways with peril gone
All night, at last by break of cheerful dawn
Obtains the brow of some high-climbing hill,
Which to his eye discovers unaware
The goodly prospect of some foreign land
First seen, or some renowned metropolis,
With glistering spires and pinnacles adorned,
Which now the rising sun gilds with his beams:
Such wonder seized, though after Heaven seen,
The spirit malign, but much more envy seized,
At sight of all this world beheld so fair
Round he surveys[2] (and well might, where he stood

[1] Formerly called Dan, from "Dan to Beersheba" being the limits of the Holy Land from N. to S.

[2] "He surveys from eastern point of Libra," one of the twelve signs exactly opposite to Aries, "to the fleecy star," Aries or the Ram, that is from east to west, for when Libra rises in the east, Aries sets full west; and Aries is said to "bear Andromeda," because that constellation represented as a woman is placed just over Aries, and therefore when Aries sets he seems to bear Andromeda "far off Atlantic seas," the great western ocean, 'beyond the horizon; then from

So high above the circling canopy
Of night's extended shade), from eastern point
Of Libra to the fleecy star that bears
Andromeda far off Atlantic seas,
Beyond the horizon; then from pole to pole
He views in breadth, and without longer pause
Down right into the world's first region throws
His flight precipitant, and winds with ease
Through the pure marble[1] air his oblique way
Amongst innumerable stars, that shone
Stars distant, but nigh hand seemed other worlds;
Or other worlds they seemed, or happy isles,
Like those Hesperian gardens[2] famed of old,
Fortunate fields, and groves, and flowery vales;
Thrice happy isles, but who dwelt happy there
He stayed not to inquire: above them all
The golden sun, in splendour likest Heaven,
Allured his eye: thither his course he bends
Through the calm firmament (but up or down,
By centre, or eccentric, hard to tell,
Or longitude), where the great luminary
Aloof the vulgar constellations thick,
That from his lordly eye keep distance due,
Dispenses light from far; they as they move
Their starry dance in numbers[3] that compute
Days, months, and years, towards his all-cheering lamp
Turn swift their various motions, or are turned
By his magnetic beam, that gently warms
The universe, and to each inward part
With gentle penetration, though unseen,
Shoots invisible virtue even to the deep;
So wondrously was set his station bright.
There lands the fiend, a spot like which, perhaps,
Astronomer in the sun's lucent orb
Through his glazed optic tube yet never saw.
The place he found beyond expression bright,

pole to pole he views in breadth," that is, from north to south, and that is said to be "in breadth," because the ancients, knowing more of the earth from east to west than from north to south, and so having a much greater journey one way than the other, one was called length, or longitude, the other breadth, or latitude.—*Newton.*

[1] *i. e.* pure, spotless: see Newton's examples.

[2] The isles about Cape Verde in Africa.

[3] *i. e.* measures, rhythm.

Compared with aught on earth, metal or stone;
Not all parts like, but all alike informed
With radiant light, as glowing iron with fire;
If metal, part seemed gold, part silver clear;
If stone, carbuncle most, or chrysolite,
Ruby or topaz, to the twelve that shone
In Aaron's breastplate, and a stone besides
Imagined rather oft than elsewhere seen,
That stone, or like to that, which here below
Philosophers in vain so long have sought;
In vain, though by their powerful art they bind
Volatile Hermes,[1] and call up unbound
In various shapes old Proteus from the sea,
Drained through a limbec to his native form.
What wonder then if fields and regions here
Breathe forth elixir pure, and rivers run
Portable gold, when with one virtuous touch
The arch-chemic sun,[2] so far from us remote,
Produces, with terrestrial humour mixed,
Here in the dark so many precious things
Of colour glorious and effect so rare?
Here matter new to gaze the devil met
Undazzled; far and wide his eye commands;
For sight no obstacle found here, nor shade,
But all sunshine, as when his beams at noon
Culminate from the equator, as they now
Shot upward still direct, whence no way round
Shadow from body opaque can fall; and the air,
Nowhere so clear, sharpened his visual ray
To objects distant far, whereby he soon
Saw within ken a glorious angel stand,
The same whom John saw also in the sun:[3]
His back was turned, but not his brightness hid;
Of beaming sunny rays a golden tiar
Circled his head, nor less his locks behind
Illustrious on his shoulders, fledge[4] with wings.

[1] Quicksilver, or mercury.

[2] The thought of making the sun the chief chemist or alchemist seems to be taken from Shakspeare, King John, act iii.:—

> "To solemnise this day, the glorious sun
> Stays in his course, and plays the alchemist,
> Turning with splendour of his precious eye
> The meagre cloddy earth to glittering gold."

[3] Rev. xix. 17.

[4] For "fledged."

Lay waving round; on some great charge employed
He seemed, or fixed in cogitation deep.
Glad was the spirit impure, as now in hope
To find who might direct his wandering flight
To Paradise, the happy seat of man,
His journey's end, and our beginning woe.
But first he casts[1] to change his proper shape,
Which else might work him danger or delay:
And now a stripling cherub he appears,
Not of the prime, yet such as in his face
Youth smiled celestial,[2] and to every limb
Suitable grace diffused, so well he feigned:
Under a coronet his flowing hair
In curls on either cheek played; wing he wore
Of many a coloured plume sprinkled with gold;
His habit fit for speed succinct,[3] and held
Before his decent steps a silver wand.
He drew not nigh unheard; the angel bright,
Ere he drew nigh, his radiant visage turned,
Admonished by his ear, and straight was known
The archangel Uriel, one of the seven
Who in God's presence, nearest to his throne,
Stand ready at command, and are his eyes[4]
That run through all the heavens, or down to the earth
Bear his swift errands, over moist and dry,
O'er sea and land: him Satan thus accosts:
"Uriel,[5] for thou of those seven spirits that stand

[1] Devises, considers.

[2] In Spenser there is a similar description of a young angel. Faërie Queen, b. ii. cant. viii. st. 5:—

"Beside his head there sat a fair young man,
Of wondrous beauty, and of freshest years,
Whose tender bud to blossom new began,
And flourish fair above his equal peers;
His snowy front curlèd with golden hairs,
Like Phœbus' face adorned with sunny rays,
Divinely shone; and two sharp wingèd shears,
Decked with diverse plumes, like painted jays,
Were fixèd at his back, to cut his airy ways."

—*Newton.*

[3] Ready, prepared.

[4] This expression, borrowed from Zech. iv. 10, probably refers to the eastern title of "eye of the king," applied to a chief officer.—See Kitto's Biblical Cyclopædia, v. i. p. 683-*b*.

[5] *i. e. God is my light.* He is mentioned as a good angel in 2 Esdras iv. and v.

In sight of God's high throne, gloriously bright.
The first art wont his great authentic will
Interpreter through highest Heaven to bring
Where all his sons thy embassy attend;
And here art likeliest by supreme decree
Like honour to obtain, and, as his eye,
To visit oft this new creation round;
Unspeakable desire to see, and know
All these his wondrous works, but chiefly man,
His chief delight and favour, him for whom
All these his works so wondrous he ordained,
Hath brought me from the quires of cherubim
Alone thus wandering. Brightest seraph, tell
In which of all these shining orbs hath man
His fixéd seat, or fixéd seat hath none,
But all these shining orbs his choice to dwell,
That I may find him, and with secret gaze
Or open admiration him behold,
On whom the great Creator hath bestowed
Worlds, and on whom hath all these graces poured,
That both in him and all things, as is meet,
The universal Maker we may praise,
Who justly hath driven out his rebel foes
To deepest Hell, and to repair that loss
Created this new happy race of men
To serve him better: wise are all his ways."
So spake the false dissembler unperceived;
For neither man nor angel can discern
Hypocrisy, the only evil that walks
Invisible, except to God alone,
By his permissive will, through Heaven and earth:
And oft, though wisdom wake, suspicion sleeps
At wisdom's gate, and to simplicity
Resigns her charge, while goodness thinks no ill
Where no ill seems: which now for once beguiled
Uriel, though regent of the sun, and held
The sharpest-sighted spirit of all in Heaven;
Who to the fraudulent impostor foul
In his uprightness answer thus returned:
"Fair angel, thy desire, which tends to know
The works of God, thereby to glorify
The great Work-Master, leads to no excess
That reaches blame, but rather merits praise
The more it seems excess, that led thee hither

From thy empyreal mansion thus alone,
To witness with thine eyes what some perhaps,
Contented with report, hear only in Heaven:
For wonderful indeed are all his works,
Pleasant to know, and worthiest to be all
Had in remembrance always with delight;
But what created mind can comprehend
Their number, or the wisdom infinite
That brought them forth, but hid their causes deep?
I saw when at his word the formless mass,
This world's material mould, came to a heap;
Confusion heard his voice, and wild uproar
Stood ruled, stood vast infinitude confined;
Till at his second bidding darkness fled,
Light shone, and order from disorder sprung.
Swift to their several quarters hasted then
The cumbrous elements, earth, flood, air, fire,
And this ethereal quintessence[1] of Heaven
Flew upward, spirited with various forms,
That rolled orbicular, and turned to stars
Numberless, as thou seest, and how they move,
Each had his place appointed, each his course;
The rest in circuit walls this universe.
Look downward on that globe, whose hither side
With light from hence, though but reflected, shines;
That place is earth, the seat of man; that light
His day, which else, as the other hemisphere,
Night would invade; but there the neighbouring moon
(So call that opposite fair star) her aid
Timely interposes, and her monthly round
Still ending, still renewing,[2] through mid Heaven,
With borrowed light her countenance triform
Hence fills and empties to enlighten the earth,

[1] The four elements hasted to their quarters, but this fifth essence flew upward. It should be "this," as it is in Milton's own editions; and not "the ethereal quintessence," as it is in Bentley's, Fenton's, and some other editions; for the angel who speaks is in the sun, and therefore says "this," as the sun was a part of this ethereal quintessence. And this notion our author borrowed from Aristotle and others of the ancient philosophers, who supposed that, besides the four elements, there was likewise an ethereal quintessence, or fifth essence, out of which the stars and heavens were formed, and its motion was orbicular.—*Newton.*

[2] Increasing with horns toward the east, decreasing with horns toward the west, and at the full.

And in her pale dominion checks the night.
That spot to which I point is Paradise,
Adam's abode, those lofty shades his bower.
Thy way thou canst not miss, me mine requires."
Thus said, he turned; and Satan, bowing low,
As to superior spirits is wont in Heaven,
Where honour due and reverence none neglects,
Took leave, and toward the coast of earth beneath,
Down from the ecliptic, sped with hoped success,
Throws his steep flight in many an airy wheel,
Nor stayed, till on Niphates' top he lights. [1]

[1] A mountain in the borders of Armenia, not far from the spring of Tigris, as Xenophon affirms upon his own knowledge. The poet lands Satan on this mountain, because it borders on Mesopotamia, in which the most judicious describers of Paradise place it.—*Hume.*

END OF THE THIRD BOOK.

BOOK IV.

THE ARGUMENT.

Satan, now in prospect of Eden, and nigh the place where he must now attempt the bold enterprise which he undertook alone against God and man, falls into many doubts with himself, and many passions, fear, envy, and despair; but at length confirms himself in evil, journeys on to Paradise, whose outward prospect and situation is described, overleaps the bounds, sits in the shape of a cormorant on the tree of life, as highest in the garden, to look about him. The garden described; Satan's first sight of Adam and Eve; his wonder at their excellent form and happy state, but with resolution to work their fall; overhears their discourse, thence gathers that the tree of knowledge was forbidden them to eat of, under penalty of death; and thereon intends to found his temptation, by seducing them to transgress; then leaves them a while, to know further of their state by some other means. Meanwhile, Uriel, descending on a sunbeam, warns Gabriel, who had in charge the gate of Paradise, that some evil spirit had escaped the deep, and passed at noon by his sphere in the shape of a good angel down to Paradise, discovered after by his furious gestures in the mount. Gabriel promises to find him ere morning. Night coming on, Adam and Eve discourse of going to their rest: their bower described; their evening worship. Gabriel drawing forth his bands of night-watch to walk the round of Paradise, appoints two strong angels to Adam's bower, lest the evil spirit should be there doing some harm to Adam or Eve sleeping; there they find him at the ear of Eve, tempting her in a dream, and bring him, though unwilling, to Gabriel; by whom questioned, he scornfully answers, prepares resistance, but, hindered by a sign from Heaven, flies out of Paradise.

Oh for that warning voice, which he who saw
The Apocalypse, heard cry in Heaven aloud,
Then when the dragon, put to second rout,
Came furious down to be revenged on men,
'Woe to the inhabitants on earth!'[1] that now,
While time was, our first parents had been warned

[1] Rev. xii. 12.

The coming of their secret foe, and 'scaped,
Haply so 'scaped his mortal snare: for now
Satan, now first inflamed with rage, came down,
The tempter ere the accuser[1] of mankind,
To wreak on innocent frail man his loss
Of that first battle, and his flight to Hell:
Yet not rejoicing in his speed, though bold
Far off and fearless, nor with cause to boast,
Begins his dire attempt; which, nigh the birth,
Now rolling boils in his tumultuous breast,
And like a devilish engine back recoils
Upon himself; horror and doubt distract
His troubled thoughts, and from the bottom stir
The Hell within him; for within him Hell
He brings, and round about him, nor from Hell
One step no more than from himself can fly
By change of place; now conscience wakes despair
That slumbered, wakes the bitter memory
Of what he was, what is, and what must be
Worse; of worse deeds worse sufferings must ensue.
Sometimes towards Eden, which now in his view
Lay pleasant, his grieved look he fixes sad;
Sometimes towards Heaven, and the full blazing sun,
Which now sat high in his meridian tower:[2]
Then much revolving, thus in sighs began:
"O thou, that, with surpassing glory crowned,[3]
Look'st from thy sole dominion, like the god
Of this new world; at whose sight all the stars
Hide their diminished heads; to thee I call,

[1] Rev. xii. 10.

[2] At noon the sun is lifted up as in a tower. So Spenser, in his translation of Virgil's Culex:—

"The fiery sun was mounted now on hight
Up to the heavenly towers." —*Richardson.*

[3] Satan being now within prospect of Eden, and looking round upon the glories of the creation, is filled with sentiments different from those which he discovered while he was in Hell. The place inspires him with thoughts more adapted to it: he reflects upon the happy condition from whence he fell, and breaks forth into a speech that is softened with several transient touches of remorse and self-accusation; but at length he confirms himself in impenitence, and in his design of drawing man into his own state of guilt and misery. This conflict of passions is raised with a great deal of art, as the opening of his speech to the sun is very bold and noble. This speech is, I think, the finest that is ascribed to Satan in the whole poem.—*Addison.*

But with no friendly voice, and add thy name,
O sun! to tell thee how I hate thy beams,
That bring to my remembrance from what state
I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere;
Till pride and worse ambition threw me down,
Warring in Heaven against Heaven's matchless King
Ah, wherefore? he deserved no such return
From me, whom he created what I was
In that bright eminence, and with his good
Upbraided none; nor was his service hard.
What could be less than to afford him praise,
The easiest recompense, and pay him thanks?
How due! yet all his good proved ill in me,
And wrought but malice; lifted up so high
I sdeined[1] subjection, and thought one step higher
Would set me highest, and in a moment quit
The debt immense of endless gratitude,
So burdensome still paying, still to owe,
Forgetful what from him I still received;
And understood not[2] that a grateful mind
By owing owes not, but still pays, at once
Indebted and discharged; what burden then?
Oh, had his powerful destiny ordained
Me some inferior angel, I had stood
Then happy: no unbounded hope had raised
Ambition. Yet why not? some other power
As great might have aspired, and me, though mean,
Drawn to his part; but other powers as great
Fell not, but stand unshaken, from within
Or from without, to all temptations armed.
Hadst thou the same free will and power to stand?
Thou hadst: whom hast thou then or what to accuse,
But Heaven's free love dealt equally to all?
Be then his love accursed, since love or hate,
To me alike, it deals eternal woe.
Nay, cursed be thou; since against his thy will
Chose freely what it now so justly rues.
Me miserable! which way shall I fly
Infinite wrath and infinite despair?
Which way I fly is Hell; myself am Hell;
And in the lowest deep a lower deep
Still threatening to devour me opens wide,

[1] Disdained, from the Italian *sdegnare*.
[2] This is connected with "I sdeined," in l. 50.

To which the Hell I suffer seems a Heaven.
Oh, then at last relent: is there no place
Left for repentance, none for pardon left?
None left but by submission; and that word
Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame
Among the spirits beneath, whom I seduced
With other promises and other vaunts
Than to submit, boasting I could subdue
The Omnipotent. Ay me! they little know
How dearly I abide that boast so vain,
Under what torments inwardly I groan,
While they adore me on the throne of Hell.
With diadem and sceptre high advanced,
The lower still I fall, only supreme
In misery; such joy ambition finds.
But say I could repent, and could obtain
By act of grace my former state; how soon
Would height recall high thoughts, how soon unsay
What feigned submission swore! ease would recant
Vows made in pain, as violent and void.
For never can true reconcilement grow
Where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep:
Which would but lead me to a worse relapse
And heavier fall: so should I purchase dear
Short intermission bought with double smart.
This knows my punisher; therefore as far
From granting he, as I from begging peace:
All hope excluded thus, behold instead
Of us outcast, exiled, his new delight,
Mankind created, and for him this world.
So farewell hope, and with hope, farewell fear,
Farewell remorse: all good to me is lost;
Evil, be thou my good; by thee at least
Divided empire with Heaven's King I hold,
By thee, and more than half perhaps will reign;
As man ere long and this new world shall know."[1]
Thus while he spake, each passion dimmed his face,
Thrice changed with pale ire, envy and despair;
Which marred his borrowed visage, and betrayed
Him counterfeit, if any eye beheld.
For heavenly minds from such distempers foul
Are ever clear. Whereof he soon aware,

[1] *i. e.* by their fall.

Each perturbation smoothed with outward calm,
Artificer of fraud, and was the first
That practised falsehood under saintly show,
Deep malice to conceal, couched with revenge;
Yet not enough had practised to deceive
Uriel once warned; whose eye pursued him down
The way he went, and on the Assyrian mount[1]
Saw him disfigured, more than could befall
Spirit of happy sort; his gestures fierce
He marked and mad demeanour, then alone,
As he supposed, all unobserved, unseen.
So on he fares, and to the border comes
Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,
Now nearer, crowns with her enclosure green,
As with a rural mound, the champaign head
Of a steep wilderness, whose hairy sides
With thicket overgrown, grotesque and wild,
Access denied; and overhead up grew
Insuperable heights of loftiest shade,
Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm.
A sylvan scene, and as the ranks ascend
Shade above shade, a woody theatre
Of stateliest view. Yet higher than their tops
The verduous wall of Paradise up-sprung:
Which to our general sire gave prospect large
Into his nether empire neighbouring round.
And higher than that wall a circling row
Of goodliest trees loaden with fairest fruit,
Blossoms and fruits at once, of golden hue,
Appeared, with gay enamelled colours mixed:
On which the sun more glad impressed his beams
Than in fair evening cloud, or humid bow,
When God hath showered the earth; so lovely seemed
That landscape; and of pure, now purer air
Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires
Vernal delight and joy, able to drive
All sadness but despair: now gentle gales,
Fanning their odoriferous wings, dispense

[1] Dr. Bentley reads *Armenian mount*; but Niphates is by Pliny reckoned between Armenia and Assyria, and therefore may be called *Assyrian*. It is plain from Milton's account of the situation of Eden, v. 210, 285, that Eden was in Assyria; and it is plain from comparing iii. 742, with iv. 27, that Niphates was not far from Eden; so that Milton must have placed it in Assyria, at least on the borders of it.—*Pearce.*

Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
Those balmy spoils.[1] As when to them who sail
Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past
Mozambic, off at sea north-east winds blow
Sabean odours from the spicy shore
Of Araby the Blest; with such delay
Well pleased they slack their course, and many a league
Cheered with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles:
So entertained those odorous sweets the fiend
Who came their bane, though with them better pleased
Than Asmodëus[2] with the fishy fume,
That drove him, though enamoured, from the spouse
Of Tobit's son, and with a vengeance sent
From Media post to Egypt, there fast bound.
Now to the ascent of that steep savage hill
Satan had journeyed on, pensive and slow;
But further way found none, so thick entwined,
As one continued brake, the undergrowth
Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplexed
All path of man or beast that passed[3] that way:
One gate there only was, and that looked east
On the other side: which, when the arch-felon saw,
Due entrance he disdained, and in contempt,
At one slight bound high overleaped all bound
Of hill or highest wall, and sheer within
Lights on his feet. As when a prowling wolf,
Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,
Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve
In hurdled cotes amid the field secure,
Leaps o'er the fence with ease into the fold:
Or as a thief bent to unhoard the cash

[1] This fine passage is undoubtedly taken from as fine a one in Shakspeare's Twelfth Night, at the beginning—

"like the sweet south
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odour." *Newton.*

[2] Asmodëus was the evil spirit, enamoured of Sarah the daughter of Raguel, whose seven husbands he destroyed; but after that she was married to the son of Tobit, he was driven away by the fumes of the heart and liver of a fish; "the which smell when the evil spirit had smelled, he fled into the utmost parts of Egypt, and the angel bound him." See the book of Tobit, chap. viii.—*Newton.*

[3] *i. e.* that would have passed. So in 642—"So seemed," *i. e.* would have seemed, if any one had been there to see him.

Of some rich burgher, whose substantial doors,
Cross-barred and bolted fast, fear no assault,
In at the window climbs, or o'er the tiles:
So clomb this first grand thief into God's fold;
So since into his church lewd hirelings climb.
Thence up he flew, and on the tree of life,
The middle tree and highest there that grew,
Sat like a cormorant; yet not true life
Thereby regained, but sat devising death
To them who lived; nor on the virtue thought
Of that life-giving plant, but only used
For prospect, what, well used, had been the pledge
Of immortality. So little knows
Any, but God alone, to value right
The good before him, but perverts best things
To worst abuse, or to their meanest use.
Beneath him with new wonder now he views
To all delight of human sense exposed
In narrow room Nature's whole wealth, yea, more,
A Heaven on earth: for blissful Paradise
Of God the garden was, by him in the east
Of Eden planted; Eden stretched her line[1]
From Auran eastward to the royal towers
Of great Seleucia, built by Grecian kings,
Or where the sons of Eden long before
Dwelt in Telassar: in this pleasant soil
His far more pleasant garden God ordained;
Out of the fertile ground he caused to grow
All trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste;
And all amid them stood the tree of life,
High eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit
Of vegetable gold; and next to life,
Our death, the tree of knowledge, grew fast by,

[1] This province (in which the terrestrial Paradise was planted) extended from "Auran," or Haran, or Charran, or Charræ, a city of Mesopotamia near the river Euphrates, extended, I say, from thence eastward to "Seleucia," a city built by Seleucus, one of the successors of Alexander the Great, upon the river Tigris. Or, in other words, this province was the same, where the children of Eden dwelt in "Telassar" (as Isaiah says, chap. xxxvii. 12), which "Telassar," or Talatha, was a province and a city of the children of Eden, placed by Ptolemy in Babylonia, upon the common stream of Tigris and Euphrates. See Sir Isaac Newton's Chronol. p. 275. So that our author places Eden, agreeably to the accounts in Scripture, somewhere in Mesopotamia.—*Newton.*

Knowledge of good, bought dear by knowing ill.
Southward through Eden went a river[1] large,
Nor changed his course, but through the shaggy hill
Passed underneath engulfed; for God had thrown
That mountain as his garden mould high raised
Upon the rapid current, which through veins
Of porous earth with kindly thirst up-drawn,
Rose a fresh fountain, and with many a rill
Watered the garden, thence united fell
Down the steep glade, and met the nether flood,
Which from his darksome passage now appears,
And now divided into four main streams,[2]
Runs diverse, wandering many a famous realm
And country, whereof here needs no account;
But rather to tell how, if art could tell,
How from that sapphire fount the crispéd brooks,
Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,
With mazy error under pendent shades
Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed
Flowers worthy of Paradise, which not nice art
In beds and curious knots, but Nature boon
Poured forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain,
Both where the morning sun first warmly smote
The open field, and where the unpiercéd shade
Embrowned the noontide bowers: thus was this place
A happy rural seat of various view;
Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums and balm,

[1] Probably the river formed by the junction of the Euphrates and Tigris, which flows *southward*.

[2] This is grounded upon the words of Moses, Gen. ii. 10:—"And a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads." Now the most probable account that is given of these four rivers we conceive to be this. The river that watered the garden of Eden was, as we think, the river formed by the junction of Euphrates and Tigris; and this river was parted into four other main streams or rivers; two above the garden, namely, Euphrates and Tigris before they are joined, and two below the garden, namely, Euphrates and Tigris after they are parted again; for Euphrates and Tigris they were still called by the Greeks and Romans, though in the time of Moses they were named Pison and Gihon. Our poet expresses it as if the river had been parted into four other rivers below the garden; but there is no being certain of these particulars; and Milton, sensible of the great uncertainty of them, wisely avoids giving any farther description of the countries through which the rivers flowed, and says in the general that no account needs to be given of them here.—*Newton*

Others whose fruit burnished with golden rind,
Hung amiable (Hesperian fables true,
If true, here only), and of delicious taste.[1]
Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks
Grazing the tender herb, were interposed,
Or palmy hillock; or the flowery lap
Of some irriguous[2] valley spread her store,
Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the rose.
Another side, umbrageous grots and caves
Of cool recess, o'er which the mantling vine
Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps
Luxuriant; meanwhile murmuring waters fall
Down the slope hills, dispersed, or in a lake,[3]
That to the fringéd bank with myrtle crowned
Her crystal mirror holds, unite their streams.
The birds their quire apply; airs, vernal airs,
Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune
The trembling leaves, while universal Pan,[4]
Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance,
Led on the eternal Spring. Not that fair field
Of Enna, where Prosérpine gathering flowers,
Herself a fairer flower, by gloomy Dis[5]
Was gathered, which cost Ceres all that pain
To seek her through the world; nor that sweet grove
Of Daphne by Orontes, and the inspired
Castalian spring, might with this Paradise

[1] I have bracketed these words, with Pearce.

[2] Well watered, full of springs and rills.

[3] He makes the lake, we may observe, a person, as Homer does the river Scamander and Virgil the Tiber; and Milton himself makes a person of the river of bliss, and a female person too, iii. 359, as he does here of the lake. This language is certainly more poetical; and I suppose he thought "her crystal mirror" sounded smoother and better than "its crystal mirror," or even "his crystal mirror."—*Newton.*

[4] While universal nature, linked with the graceful seasons, danced a perpetual round, and throughout the earth, yet unpolluted, led eternal spring. All the poets favour the opinion of the world's creation in the spring, Virg. Georg. ii. 338:—

"Ver illud erat, ver magnus agebat."

And Homer joins both the Graces and Hours hand-in-hand with Harmony, Youth, and Venus, in his hymn to Apollo.—*Hume.*

The Ancients personized everything. "Pan" is nature, the "Graces" are the beautiful seasons, and the "Hours" are the time requisite for the production and perfection of things.—*Richardson.*

[5] Pluto.

Of Eden strive; nor that Nyseian isle
Girt with the river Triton, where old Cham,
Whom Gentiles Ammon call, and Lybian Jove,
Hid Amalthea and her florid son,
Young Bacchus, from his stepdame Rhea's eye;
Nor where Abassin kings their issue guard,
Mount Amara, though this by some supposed
True Paradise, under the Ethiop line,
By Nilus' head, enclosed with shining rock,
A whole day's journey high, but wide remote
From this Assyrian garden, where the fiend
Saw undelighted all delight, all kind
Of living creatures, new to sight, and strange
Two of far nobler shape, erect and tall,
Godlike erect, with native honour clad,
In naked majesty, seemed lords of all,
And worthy seemed; for in their looks divine
The image of their glorious Maker shone;
Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure
(Severe, but in true filial freedom placed),
Whence true authority in men; though both
Not equal, as their sex not equal seemed;
For contemplation he and valour formed;
For softness she, and sweet attractive grace;
He for God only, she for God in him:
His fair large front, and eye sublime, declared
Absolute rule; and hyacinthine[1] locks
Round from his parted forelock manly hung
Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad:
She, as a veil, down to the slender waist
Her unadornèd golden tresses wore
Dishevelled, but in wanton ringlets waved,
As the vine curls her tendrils, which implied
Subjection, but required with gentle sway,
And by her yielded, by him best received,
Yielded with coy submission, modest pride,
And sweet, reluctant, amorous delay.
Nor those mysterious parts were then concealed,
Then was not guilty shame: dishonest shame
Of nature's works, honour dishonourable,
Sin-bred, how have ye troubled all mankind
With shows instead, mere shows of seeming pure,
And banished from man's life his happiest life,

[1] *i. e* dark purply-brown.

Simplicity and spotless innocence!
So passed they naked on, nor shunned
The sight of God or angel, for they thought no ill:
So hand in hand they passed, the loveliest pair
That ever since in love's embraces met;
Adam, the goodliest man of men since born[1]
His sons; the fairest of her daughters Eve.
Under a tuft of shade that on a green
Stood whispering soft, by a fresh fountain side
They sat them down; and after no more toil
Of their sweet gardening labour than sufficed
To recommend cool zephyr, and made ease
More easy, wholesome thirst and appetite
More grateful, to their supper fruits they fell;
Nectarine fruits, which the compliant boughs
Yielded them; sidelong as they sat recline
On the soft downy bank damasked with flowers:
The savory pulp they chew, and in the rind
Still as they thirsted scoop the brimming stream:
Nor gentle purpose,[2] nor endearing smiles
Wanted, nor youthful dalliance as beseems
Fair couple, linked in happy nuptial league,
Alone as they. About them frisking played
All beasts of the earth, since wild, and of all chase
In wood or wilderness, forest or den;
Sporting the lion ramped, and in his paw
Dandled the kid; bears, tigers, ounces, pards,
Gambolled before them; the unwieldy elephant,
To make them mirth, used all his might, and wreathed
His lithe[3] proboscis; close the serpent[4] sly
Insinuating, wove with Gordian twine

[1] This manner of expression is borrowed from the Greek language, in which we find sometimes the superlative degree used instead of the comparative. The meaning therefore is, that Adam was a goodlier man than any of his sons, and Eve fairer than her daughters. So Achilles is said to have been ὠκυμορώτατος ἀλλων, Iliad, i. 505; that is, more short-lived than others.— *ewton.*

[2] From Spenser, F. Q. iii. 8, 14:—

"He 'gan make gentle purpose to his dame."—*Thyer.*

[3] Lissom, flexible.

[4] We may observe that the poet is larger in the description of the serpent than of any of the other animals; and very judiciously, as he is afterwards made the instrument of so much mischief; and, at the same time, an intimation is given "of his fatal guile," to prepare the reader for what follows.—*Newton.*

His braided train, and of his fatal guile
Gave proof unheeded; others on the grass
Couched, and now filled with pasture gazing sat,
Or bedward ruminating; for the sun,
Declined, was hasting now with prone career
To the ocean isles,[1] and in the ascending scale
Of Heaven, the stars that usher evening rose:
When Satan, still in gaze, as first he stood,
Scarce thus at length failed speech recovered sad:
"O Hell! what do mine eyes with grief behold!
Into our room of bliss thus high advanced
Creatures of other mould, earth-born perhaps,
Not spirits, yet to heavenly spirits bright
Little inferior; whom my thoughts pursue
With wonder, and could love, so lively shines
In them divine resemblance, and such grace
The hand that formed them on their shape hath poured.
Ah! gentle pair, ye little think how nigh
Your change approaches, when all these delights
Will vanish, and deliver ye to woe,
More woe, the more your taste is now of joy;
Happy, but for so happy ill secured
Long to continue, and this high seat, your heaven,
Ill fenced for Heaven to keep out such a foe
As now is entered; yet no purposed foe
To you, whom I could pity thus forlorn,
Though I unpitied: league with you I seek,
And mutual amity so strait, so close,
That I with you must dwell, or you with me
Henceforth: my dwelling haply may not please,
Like this fair Paradise, your sense; yet such
Accept your Maker's work; he gave it me,
Which I as freely give: Hell shall unfold

[1] The islands in the Western Ocean; for that the sun set in the sea, and rose out of it again, was an ancient poetic notion, and is become part of the phraseology of poetry. "And in the ascending scale of heaven." The "balance" of Heaven, or Libra, is one of the twelve signs; and when the sun is in that sign, as he is at the autumnal equinox, the days and nights are equal, as if weighed in a balance:—

"*Libra* diei somnique pares ubi fecerit horas."

Virg. Georg. i. 208.

And from hence our author seems to have borrowed his metaphor of the "scales" of Heaven, weighing night and day, the one ascending as the other sinks.—*Newton.*

To entertain you two, her widest gates,
And send forth all her kings; there will be room,
Not like these narrow limits, to receive
Your numerous offspring; if no better place,
Thank him who puts me loth to this revenge
On you who wrong me not for him who wronged.
And should I at your harmless innocence
Melt, as I do, yet public reason just,
Honour and empire, with revenge enlarged,
By conquering this new world, compels me now
To do what else, though damned, I should abhor."
So spake the fiend, and with necessity,
The tyrant's plea, excused his devilish deeds.
Then from his lofty stand on that high tree
Down he alights among the sportful herd
Of those four-footed kinds, himself now one,
Now other, as their shape served best his end
Nearer to view his prey, and unespied
To mark what of their state he more might learn
By word or action marked: about them round
A lion now he stalks with fiery glare;
Then as a tiger, who by chance hath spied
In some purlieu two gentle fawns at play,
Straight couches close, then rising changes oft
His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground.
Whence rushing he might surest sieze them both
Griped in each paw: when Adam, first of men,
To first of women, Eve, thus moving speech,
Turned him, all ear to hear new utterance flow:
"Sole partner, and sole part of all these joys,
Dearer thyself than all; needs must the Power
That made us, and for us this ample world,
Be infinitely good, and of his good
As liberal and free as infinite;
That raised us from the dust and placed us here
In all this happiness, who at his hand
Have nothing merited, nor can perform
Aught whereof he hath need, he who requires
From us no other service than to keep
This one, this easy charge, of all the trees
In Paradise that bear delicious fruit
So various, not to taste that only tree
Of knowledge, planted by the tree of life.
So near grows death to life, whate'er death is,

Some dreadful thing, no doubt; for well thou knowest
God hath pronounced it death to taste that tree,
The only sign of our obedience left
Among so many signs of power and rule
Conferred upon us, and dominion given
Over all other creatures that possess
Earth, air, and sea. Then let us not think hard
One easy prohibition, who enjoy
Free leave so large to all things else, and choice
Unlimited of manifold delights:
But let us ever praise him, and extol
His bounty, following our delightful task,
To prune these growing plants, and tend these flowers,
Which were it toilsome, yet with thee were sweet."
To whom thus Eve replied: "O thou for whom
And from whom I was formed, flesh of thy flesh,
And without whom am to no end, my guide
And head, what thou hast said is just and right.
For we to him indeed all praises owe,
And daily thanks; I chiefly, who enjoy
So far the happier lot, enjoying thee
Pre-eminent by so much odds, while thou
Like consort to thyself canst no where find.
That day I oft remember,[1] when from sleep
I first awaked,[2] and found myself reposed
Under a shade on flowers, much wondering where
And what I was, whence thither brought and how
Not distant far from thence a murmuring sound
Of waters issued from a cave, and spread
Into a liquid plain, then stood unmoved
Pure as the expanse of Heaven; I thither went
With unexperienced thought, and laid me down
On the green bank, to look into the clear
Smooth lake, that to me seemed another sky.
As I bent down to look, just opposite

[1] From this, as well as several other passages in the poem, it appears that the poet supposes Adam and Eve to have been created, and to have lived many days in Paradise before the Fall. See iv. 639, 680, 712, v. 31, &c.—*Newton.* The Rabbins, and some of the fathers, on the contrary, believed that the Fall happened on the very day Adam and Eve were created. See "Universal Ancient History," v. i. p. 121, ed. 8vo.

[2] As death is often compared to "sleep," so our coming into life may well be likened to "waking." And Adam speaks in the same figure. viii. 253.—*Newton.*

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A shape within the watery gleam appeared,
Bending to look on me; I started back,
It started back; but pleased I soon returned,
Pleased it returned as soon with answering looks
Of sympathy and love; there I had fixed
Mine eyes till now, and pined with vain desire,
Had not a voice thus warned me: 'What thou seest,
What there thou seest, fair creature, is thyself;
With thee it came and goes: but follow me,
And I will bring thee where no shadow stays
Thy coming, and thy soft embraces, he
Whose image thou art; him thou shalt enjoy
Inseparably thine, to him shalt bear
Multitudes like thyself, and thence be called
Mother of human race.' What could I do,
But follow straight, invisibly thus led?
Till I espied thee, fair indeed, and tall,
Under a plantain; yet methought less fair,
Lest winning soft, less amiably mild,
Than that smooth watery image; back I turned;
Thou following criedst aloud, 'Return, fair Eve,
Whom fliest thou? whom thou fliest, of him thou art,
His flesh, his bone; to give thee being I lent
Out of my side to thee, nearest my heart,
Substantial life, to have thee by my side
Henceforth an individual solace dear;
Part of my soul I seek thee, and thee claim
My other half.' With that thy gentle hand
Seized mine; I yielded, and from that time see
How beauty is excelled by manly grace
And wisdom, which alone is truly fair."
So spake our general mother, and with eyes
Of conjugal attraction unreproved,
And meek surrender, half-embracing leaned
On our first father; half her swelling breast
Naked met his under the flowing gold
Of her loose tresses hid: he in delight
Both of her beauty and submissive charms
Smiled with superior love, as Jupiter
On Juno smiles, when he impregns the clouds
That shed May flowers; and pressed her matron[1] lip
With kisses pure; aside the devil turned

[1] Denoting the lawfulness of their love

For envy, yet with jealous leer malign
Eyed them askance, and to himself thus 'plained:
"Sight hateful, sight tormenting! thus these two,
Imparadised[1] in one another's arms,
The happier Eden, shall enjoy their fill
Of bliss on bliss; while I to Hell am thrust,
Where[2] neither joy nor love, but fierce desire,
Among our other torments not the least,
Still unfulfilled with pain of longing pines.
Yet let me not forget what I have gained
From their own mouths: all is not theirs, it seems;
One fatal tree there stands, of knowledge called,
Forbidden them to taste: knowledge forbidden?
Suspicious, reasonless. Why should their Lord
Envy them that? Can it be sin to know?
Can it be death? And do they only stand
By ignorance? Is that their happy state,
The proof of their obedience and their faith?
Oh, fair foundation laid whereon to build
Their ruin! Hence I will excite their minds
With more desire to know, and to reject
Envious commands, invented with design
To keep them low whom knowledge might exalt
Equal with gods: aspiring to be such,
They taste and die: what likelier can ensue?
But first with narrow search I must walk round
This garden, and no corner leave unspied;
A chance but chance[3] may lead where I may meet
Some wandering spirit of Heaven by fountain side,
Or in thick shade retired, from him to draw
What further would be learned. Live while ye may,
Yet happy pair; enjoy, till I return,
Short pleasures, for long woes are to succeed."
So saying, his proud step he scornful turned,
But with sly circumspection, and began
Through wood, through waste, o'er hill, o'er dale, his roam.
Meanwhile in utmost longitude, where Heaven
With earth and ocean meets, the setting sun

[1] Bentley quotes an example of this word from Sir Philip Sidney's "Arcadia," p. 109. "This *imparadised* neighbourhood."

[2] *i. e.* where there is.

[3] A disagreeable jingle of words. It has been compared with the *forte fortuna* of Latin authors.

Slowly descended,[1] and with right aspect
Against the eastern gate of Paradise
Levelled his evening rays: it was a rock
Of alabaster, piled up to the clouds,
Conspicuous far, winding with one ascent
Accessible from earth, one entrance high,
The rest was craggy cliff, that overhung
Still as it rose, impossible to climb.
Betwixt these rocky pillars Gabriel[2] sat,
Chief of the angelic guards, awaiting night;
About him exercised heroic games
The unarmed youth of Heaven, but, nigh at hand,
Celestial armoury, shields, helms, and spears,
Hung high with diamond flaming, and with gold.
Thither came Uriel, gliding through the even[3]
On a sunbeam, swift as a shooting star[4]
In autumn thwarts the night, when vapours fired
Impress the air, and shows the mariner

[1] Bentley objects to this verse, and reads "had low descended," because the sun passes equal spaces in equal times. This is true (as Pearce replies) in philosophy, but in poetry it is usual to represent it otherwise. But I have a stronger objection to this verse, which is, that it seems to contradict what is said before, ver. 353:—

"The sun—was *hasting now with prone career*
To th' ocean isles;"

and, to reconcile them, I think we must read, "had low descended," or perhaps "lowly descended," or understand it as Dr. Pearce explains it, that the sun descended "slowly" at this time, because Uriel, its angel, came on a sunbeam to Paradise, and was to return on the same beam; which he could not well have done, if the sun had moved on with its usual rapidity of course.—*Newton.* There is no discrepancy, if we recollect that the nearer the sun descends to the horizon, the more slowly it seems to fade from the view.

[2] One of the archangels sent to show Daniel the vision of the four monarchies and the seventy weeks, Dan. vii. and ix., and to the Virgin Mary to reveal the incarnation of our Saviour, Luke i. His name in the Hebrew signifies "the man of God," or "the strength and power of God;" well, by our author, posted as chief of the angelic guards placed about Paradise.—*Hume.*

[3] *i. e.* through that part of the heavens, where it was then evening.

[4] Homer, in like manner, compares Minerva's descent from heaven to a shooting star, Iliad, iv. 74, which Pope unfortunately translates *a comet*, as follows:—

"Like the red comet, from Saturnius sent,
To fright the nations with a dire portent
(A fatal sign to armies in the plain,
As trembling sailors on the wintry main)."

From what point of his compass to beware
Impetuous winds: he thus began in haste:
"Gabriel, to thee thy course by lot hath given
Charge and strict watch, that to this happy place
No evil thing approach or enter in.
This day at height of noon came to my sphere
A spirit, zealous, as he seemed, to know
More of the Almighty's works, and chiefly man,
God's latest image: I described his way
Bent all on speed, and marked his airy gait;
But in the mount that lies from Eden north,
Where he first lighted, soon discerned his looks
Alien from Heaven, with passions foul obscured:
Mine eye pursued him still, but under shade
Lost sight of him: one of the banished crew,
I fear, hath ventured from the deep, to raise
New troubles; him thy care must be to find."
To whom the winged warrior thus returned:
"Uriel, no wonder if thy perfect sight,
Amid the sun's bright circle where thou sitt'st,
See far and wide: in at this gate none pass
The vigilance here placed, but such as come
Well known from Heaven; and since meridian hour
No creature thence: if spirit of other sort,
So minded, have o'erleaped these earthy bounds
On purpose, hard thou knowest it to exclude
Spiritual substance with corporeal bar.
But if within the circuit of these walks,

The fall of Phaëton is illustrated by the same comparison by Ovid. Met. ii. 320:—

"The breathless Phaëton, with flaming hair,
Shot from the chariot like a falling star,
That in a summer's evening from the top
Of Heaven drops down, or seems at least to drop."
Addison.

Milton adds that this shooting star "thwarts" or crosses the night "in autumn," because then these phenomena are most common after the heat of summer, when the vapours taking fire made violent impressions and agitations in the air, and they usually portend tempestuous weather, as Virgil himself has noted long ago, Georg. i. 365:—

"And oft before tempestuous winds arise,
The seeming stars fall headlong from the skies;
And, shooting through the darkness, gild the night
With sweeping glories and long trails of light."
Dryden.—Newton.

In whatsoever shape he lurk, of whom
Thou tell'st, by morrow dawning I shall know."
So promised he; and Uriel to his charge
Returned on that bright beam, whose point now raised
Bore him slope downward to the sun, now fallen
Beneath the Azores; whether the prime orb,
Incredible how swift, had thither rolled
Diurnal, or this less volubil earth,
By shorter flight to the east,[1] had left him there
Arraying with reflected purple and gold
The clouds that on his western throne attend
Now came still evening on,[2] and twilight gray
Had in her sober livery all things clad;
Silence accompanied; for beast and bird,
They to their grassy couch, these to their nests
Were slunk, all but the wakeful nightingale;
She all night long her amorous descant sung;
Silence was pleased: now glowed the firmament
With living sapphires: Hesperus, that led
The starry host, rode brightest, till the moon,
Rising in clouded majesty, at length,
Apparent queen, unveiled her peerless light,
And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw.
When Adam thus to Eve: "Fair consort, the hour
Of night, and all things now retired to rest,
Mind us of light repose; since God hath set
Labour and rest, as day and night, to men
Successive; and the timely dew of sleep,
Now falling with soft slumbrous weight, inclines
Our eyelids:[3] other creatures all day long

[1] It being "less motion for the earth to move from west to east upon its own axis, according to the system of Copernicus, than for the heavens and heavenly bodies to move from east to west, according to the system of Ptolemy."—*Newton.*

[2] This is the first evening in the poem; for the action of the preceding books lying out of the sphere of the sun, the time could not be computed. When Satan came first to the earth, and made that famous soliloquy at the beginning of this book, the sun was "high in his meridian tower;" and this is the evening of that day; and surely there never was a finer evening; words cannot furnish out a more lovely description."—*Newton.*

[3] Spenser F. Q. b. i. c. i. s. 36:—

"The drooping night thus creepeth on them fast,
And the sad humour loading their eyelids,
As messenger of Morpheus on them cast
Sweet slumbering dew, the which to sleep them bids."—*Thyer.*

Rove idle unemployed, and less need rest;
Man hath his daily work of body or mind
Appointed, which declares his dignity,
And the regard of Heaven on all his ways;
While other animals inactive range,
And of their doings God takes no account.
To-morrow, ere fresh morning streak the east
With first approach of light, we must be risen,
And at our pleasant labour, to reform
Yon flowery arbours, yonder alleys green,
Our walk at noon, with branches overgrown,
That mock our scant manuring,[1] and require
More hands than ours to lop their wanton growth:
Those blossoms also, and those dropping gums,
That lie bestrown, unsightly and unsmooth,
Ask riddance, if we mean to tread with ease;
Meanwhile, as nature wills, night bids us rest."
To whom thus Eve, with perfect beauty adorned:
"My author and disposer, what thou bidd'st
Unargued I obey; so God ordains;
God is thy law, thou mine: to know no more
Is woman's happiest knowledge and her praise.
With thee conversing I forget all time;
All seasons[2] and their change, all please alike.
Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,
With charm of earliest birds; pleasant the sun,
When first on this delightful land he spreads
His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,
Glistering with dew; fragrant the fertile earth
After soft showers; and sweet the coming on
Of grateful evening mild; then silent night
With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,
And these the gems of Heaven, her starry train:
But neither breath of morn when she ascends
With charm of earliest birds; nor rising sun
On this delightful land; nor herb, fruit, flower,
Glistering with dew; nor fragrance after showers;
Nor grateful evening mild; nor silent night
With this her solemn bird; nor walk by moon,
Or glittering starlight, without thee is sweet.

[1] Manuring is not here to be understood in the common sense, but as working with hands, as the French *manouvrer*; it is, as immediately after, to lop, to rid away what is scattered.—*Richardson.*

[2] *i. e.* of the day, as in viii. 69; ix. 200.

But wherefore all night long shine these? For whom
This glorious sight, when sleep hath shut all eyes?"
To whom our general ancestor replied:
"Daughter of God and man, accomplished Eve,
These have their course to finish round the earth,
By morrow evening, and from land to land
In order, though to nations yet unborn,
Ministering light prepared, they set and rise;
Lest total darkness should by night regain
Her old possession, and extinguish life
In nature and all things, which these soft fires
Not only enlighten, but with kindly heat
Of various influence foment and warm,
Temper or nourish, or in part shed down
Their stellar virtue[1] on all kinds that grow
On earth, made hereby apter to receive
Perfection from the sun's more potent ray.
These, then, though unbeheld in deep of night,
Shine not in vain; nor think, though men were none,
That Heaven would want spectators, God want praise
Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep.
All these with ceaseless praise his works behold
Both day and night. How often from the steep
Of echoing hill or thicket have we heard
Celestial voices to the midnight air,
Sole, or responsive each to other's note,
Singing their great Creator! Oft in bands
While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk,
With heavenly touch of instrumental sounds
In full harmonic number joined, their songs
Divide the night,[2] and lift our thoughts to Heaven."
Thus talking, hand in hand alone they passed
On to their blissful bower; it was a place

[1] It may be remarked, once for all, that Milton's taste for displaying his own learning sometimes betrays him into details at variance with the simplicity of poetry, and almost amusingly inconsistent with the primitive nature of those of whom he discourses. But he seems to have had in mind an old notion, that Adam was minutely acquainted with the nature and properties, as well as the *names*, of all the objects he beheld around him. On the *knowledge* and *wisdom* of Adam, the student may compare an eloquent article in Kitto's Bibl. Cyclop. v. i. p. 60.

[2] Into watches, as the sounding of the trumpet did among the ancients.

Chosen by the sovereign Planter, when he framed
All things to man's delightful use; the roof
Of thickest covert was inwoven shade
Laurel and myrtle, and what higher grew
Of firm and fragrant leaf; on either side
Acanthus, and each odorous bushy shrub,
Fenced up the verdant wall; each beauteous flower;
Iris all hues, roses, and jessamine,
Reared high their flourished heads between, and wrought
Mosaic; underfoot the violet,
Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay
Broidered the ground,[1] more coloured than with stone
Of costliest emblem:[2] other creature here.
Beast, bird, insect, or worm, durst enter none:
Such was their awe of man. In shadier bower,
More sacred and sequestered, though but feigned,
Pan or Sylvanus never slept, nor nymph
Nor faunus haunted. Here in close recess,
With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs,
Espoused Eve decked first her nuptial bed,
And heavenly quires the hymenæan sung,
What day the genial angel to our sire
Brought her in naked beauty more adorned,
More lovely than Pandora,[3] whom the gods
Endowed with all their gifts, and oh! too like
In sad event, when to the unwiser son
Of Japhet brought by Hermes, she ensnared

[1] Cf. Homer, Il. xiv. where he describes the springing up of flowers to form a couch for Jupiter and Juno:—

"Glad earth perceives, and from her bosom pours
Unbidden herbs, and voluntary flowers;
Thick new-born violets a soft carpet spread,
And clustering lotus swelled the rising bed,
And sudden hyacinths the turf bestrow,
And flamy crocus made the mountain glow."—*Pope.*

[2] Design in laying.

[3] Prometheus, the son of Japhet (or Japetus), had stolen fire from heaven—Jove's authentic fire, the original and prototype of all earthly fire; which Jupiter being angry at, to be revenged sent him Pandora, so called because *all* the Gods had contributed their *gifts* to make her more charming (for so the word signifies). She was brought by Hermes (Mercury), but was not received by Prometheus, the wiser son of Japhet (as the name implies), but by his brother Epimetheus, the unwiser son. She enticed his foolish curiosity to open a box which she brought, wherein were contained all manner of evils.—*Richardson.*

Mankind with her fair looks, to be avenged
On him who had stole Jove's authentic fire.
Thus at their shady lodge arrived, both stood,
Both turned, and under open sky adored
The God that made both sky, air, earth, and heaven,
Which they beheld; the moon's resplendent globe,
And starry pole: "Thou[1] also madest the night,
Maker Omnipotent, and thou the day,
Which we in our appointed work employed
Have finished, happy in our mutual help
And mutual love, the crown of all our bliss,
Ordained by thee, and this delicious place,
For us too large, where thy abundance wants
Partakers, and uncropt falls to the ground.
But thou hast promised from us two a race
To fill the earth, who shall with us extol
Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,
And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep."
This said unanimous, and other rites
Observing none, but adoration pure,
Which God likes best, into their inmost bower
Handed they went; and, eased the putting off
These troublesome disguises which we wear,
Straight side by side were laid; nor turned, I ween,
Adam from his fair spouse, nor Eve the rites
Mysterious of connubial love refused;
Whatever hypocrites austerely talk
Of purity, and place, and innocence,
Defaming as impure what God declares
Pure, and commands to some, leaves free to all
Our Maker bids increase; who bids abstain
But our destroyer, foe to God and man?
Hail, wedded love! mysterious law, true source
Of human offspring, sole propriety
In Paradise of all things common else.
By thee adulterous lust was driven from men
Among the bestial herds to range; by thee,
Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure,
Relations dear, and all the charities
Of father, son, and brother first were known.
Far be it that I should write thee sin or blame,

[1] Observe the magnificence of this sudden change from the oblique manner of speaking to the direct address.

Or think thee unbefitting holiest place,
Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets,
Whose bed is undefiled and chaste pronounced,
Present, or past, as saints and patriarchs used.
Here love his golden shafts employs, here lights
His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings,
Reigns here and revels; not in the bought smile
Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unendeared,
Casual fruition; nor in court amours,
Mixed dance, or wanton mask, or midnight ball,
Or serenade, which the starved lover sings
To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain.
These, lulled by nightingales, embracing slept,
And on their naked limbs the flowery roof
Showered roses, which the morn repaired. Sleep on,
Blest pair; and oh! yet happiest, if ye seek
No happier state, and know to know no more.
Now had night measured with her shadowy cone[1]
Halfway up-hill[2] this vast sublunar vault,
And from their ivory port[3] the cherubim,
Forth issuing at the accustomed hour, stood armed
To their night watches in warlike parade,
When Gabriel to his next in power thus spake:
"Uzziel,[4] half these draw off, and coast the south
With strictest watch; these other wheel the north;
Our circuit meets full west." As flame they part,
Half wheeling to the shield, half to the spear.
From these, two strong and subtle spirits he called,
That near him stood, and gave them thus in charge:

[1] This is the form of the shadow of the earth, the base of the cone standing upon that side of the globe where the sun is not, and consequently when it is night there. This cone, to those who are on the darkened side of the earth, could it be seen, would mount as the sun fell lower, and be at its utmost height in the vault of their heaven when it was midnight. The shadowy cone had now arisen halfway, consequently, supposing it to be about the time when the days and nights were of equal length (as it was x. 329), it must be now about nine o'clock, the usual time of the angels setting their sentries, as it immediately follows. This is marking the time very poetically.—*Richardson.*

[2] Halfway towards midnight.

[3] As the rock was of alabaster (vi. 543), so he makes the gate of ivory, which was very proper for an eastern gate, as the fairest ivory comes from the east.—*Newton.*

[4] *Strength of God;* the angel next in command to Gabriel.

"Ithuriel and Zephon,[1] with winged speed
Search through this garden; leave unsearched no nook;
But chiefly where those two fair creatures lodge,
Now laid, perhaps, asleep, secure of harm.
This evening from the sun's decline arrived
Who tells of some infernal spirit seen
Hitherward bent (who could have thought?) escaped
The bars of Hell, on errand bad no doubt:
Such where ye find, seize fast, and hither bring."
So saying, on he led his radiant files,
Dazzling the moon: these to the bower direct
In search of whom they sought: him there they found
Squat like a toad, close at the ear of Eve,
Assaying by his devilish art to reach
The organs of her fancy, and with them forge
Illusions as he list, phantasms and dreams,
Or if, inspiring venom, he might taint
The animal spirits that from pure blood arise
Like gentle breaths from rivers pure, thence raise
At least distempered, discontented thoughts,
Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires,
Blown up with high conceits engendering pride
Him thus intent, Ithuriel with his spear
Touched lightly; for no falsehood can endure
Touch of celestial temper, but returns
Of force to its own likeness: up he starts,
Discovered and surprised. As when a spark
Lights on a heap of nitrous powder, laid
Fit for the tun some magazine to store
Against a rumoured war, the smutty grain,
With sudden blaze diffused, inflames the air:
So started up in his own shape the fiend.
Back stepped those two fair angels, half amazed
So sudden to behold the grisly king;
Yet thus, unmoved with fear, accost him soon:
"Which of those rebel spirits adjudged to Hell
Comest thou, escaped thy prison? and, transformed,
Why satt'st thou like an enemy in wait,
Here watching at the head of these that sleep?"
"Know ye not then," said Satan, filled with scorn,
"Know ye not me? Ye knew me once no mate

[1] Two angels having their names as indication of their offices. Ithuriel, in Hebrew, "the discovery of God;" Zephon, in Hebrew, "a secret, or searcher of secrets."—*Hume.*

For you, there sitting where ye durst not soar:
Not to know me argues yourselves unknown,
The lowest of your throng; or if ye know,
Why ask ye, and superfluous begin
Your message, like to end as much in vain?"
To whom thus Zephon, answering scorn with scorn:
"Think not, revolted spirit, thy shape the same,
Or undiminished brightness to be known,
As when thou stood'st in Heaven, upright and pure;
That glory then, when thou no more wast good,
Departed from thee; and thou resemblest now
Thy sin and place of doom obscure and foul.
But come, for thou, be sure, shalt give account
To him who sent us, whose charge is to keep
This place inviolable, and these from harm."
So spake the cherub; and his grave rebuke,
Severe in youthful beauty, added grace
Invincible: abashed the devil stood,
And felt how awful goodness is, and saw
Virtue in her shape how lovely; saw, and pined
His loss; but chiefly to find here observed
His lustre visibly impaired; yet seemed
Undaunted. "If I must contend," said he,
"Best with the best, the sender, not the sent,
Or all at once; more glory will be won,
Or less be lost." "Thy fear," said Zephon bold.
"Will save us trial what the least can do
Single against thee wicked, and thence weak"
The fiend replied not, overcome with rage;
But, like a proud steed reined, went haughty on,
Champing his iron curb: to strive or fly
He held it vain; awe from above had quelled
His heart, not else dismayed. Now drew they nigh
The western point, where those half-rounding guards
Just met, and, closing, stood in squadron joined,
Awaiting next command. To whom their chief,
Gabriël, from the front thus called aloud:
"O friends! I hear the tread of nimble feet
Hasting this way, and now by glimpse discern
Ithuriel and Zephon through the shade,
And with them comes a third of regal port,
But faded splendour wan; who, by his gait
And fierce demeanour, seems the prince of Hell,

Not likely to part hence without contest;
Stand firm, for in his look defiance lours."
He scarce had ended, when these two approached,
And brief related whom they brought, where found,
How busied, in what form and posture couched.
To whom with stern regard thus Gabriel spake:
"Why hast thou, Satan, broke the bounds prescribed
To thy transgressions, and disturbed the charge
Of others, who approve not to transgress
By thy example, but have power and right
To question thy bold entrance on this place;
Employed, it seems, to violate sleep, and those
Whose dwelling God hath planted here in bliss?"
To whom thus Satan with contemptuous brow:
"Gabriel, thou hadst in Heaven the esteem of wise,
And such I held thee; but this question asked
Puts me in doubt. Lives there who loves his pain?
Who would not, finding way, break loose from Hell,
Though thither doomed? Thou wouldst thyself, no doubt,
And boldly venture to whatever place
Farthest from pain, where thou mightst hope to change
Torment with ease, and soonest recompense
Dole with delight, which in this place I sought;
To thee no reason, who know'st only good,
But evil hast not tried; and wilt object
His will who bound us? Let him surer bar
His iron gates, if he intends our stay
In that dark durance: thus much what was asked
The rest is true, they found me where they say;
But that implies not violence or harm."
Thus he in scorn. The warlike angel moved,
Disdainfully half smiling, thus replied:
"O loss of one in Heaven, to judge of wise,
Since Satan fell, whom folly overthrew,
And now returns him from his prison 'scaped,
Gravely in doubt whether to hold them wise
Or not, who ask what boldness brought him hither
Unlicensed from his bounds in Hell prescribed;
So wise he judges it to fly from pain
However, and to 'scape his punishment.
So judge thou still, presumptuous, till the wrath,
Which thou incurr'st by flying, meet thy flight
Sevenfold, and scourge that wisdom back to Hell,
Which taught thee yet no better, that no pain

Can equal anger infinite provoked.
But wherefore thou alone? Wherefore with thee
Came not all Hell broke loose? Is pain to them
Less pain, less to flee? or thou than they
Less hardy to endure? Courageous chief!
The first in flight from pain, hadst thou alleged
To thy deserted host this cause of flight,
Thou surely hadst not come sole fugitive."

To which the fiend thus answered, frowning stern:
"Not that I less endure or shrink from pain,
Insulting angel; well thou know'st I stood
Thy fiercest, when in battle to thy aid
The blasting volleyed thunder made all speed,
And seconded thy else not dreaded spear.
But still thy words at random, as before,
Argue thy inexperience what behoves
From hard assays and ill successes past,
A faithful leader, not to hazard all
Through ways of danger by himself untried:
I, therefore, I alone first undertook
To wing the desolate abyss, and spy
This new created world, whereof in Hell
Fame is not silent, here in hope to find
Better abode, and my afflicted powers
To settle here on earth, or in mid air;
Though for possession put to try once more
What thou and thy gay legions dare against;
Whose easier business were to serve their Lord
High up in Heaven, with songs to hymn his throne,
And practised distances to cringe, not fight."

To whom the warrior angel soon replied:
"To say and straight unsay, pretending first
Wise to fly pain, professing next the spy,
Argues no leader, but a liar traced,
Satan, and couldst thou faithful add? O name,
O sacred name of faithfulness profaned!
Faithful to whom? to thy rebellious crew?
Army of fiends, fit body to fit head.
Was this your discipline and faith engaged,
Your military obedience, to dissolve
Allegiance to the acknowledged power supreme?
And thou, sly hypocrite, who now wouldst seem
Patron of liberty, who more than thou
Once fawned, and cringed, and servilely adored

Heaven's awful monarch? wherefore, but in hope
To dispossess him, and thyself to reign?
But mark what I arreed[1] thee now: Avaunt!
Fly thither whence thou fled'st: if from this hour
Within these hallowed limits thou appear,
Back to the infernal pit I drag thee chained,
And seal[2] thee so, as henceforth not to scorn
The facile gates of Hell, too slightly barred."
So threatened he; but Satan to no threats
Gave heed, but waxing more in rage replied:
"Then when I am thy captive talk of chains,
Proud limitary[3] cherub! But ere then
Far heavier load thyself expect to feel
From my prevailing arm, though Heaven's King
Ride on thy wings, and thou, with thy compeers,
Used to the yoke, draw'st his triumphant wheels
In progress through the road of Heaven star-paved."
While thus he spake, the angelic squadron bright
Turned fiery red, sharpening in mooned horns
Their phalanx, and began to hem him round
With ported[4] spears, as thick as when a field[5]
Of Ceres, ripe for harvest, waving bends
Her bearded grove of ears, which way the wind
Sways them; the careful ploughman doubting stands,
Lest on the threshing floor his hopeful sheaves
Prove chaff. On the other side, Satan, alarmed,
Collecting all his might, dilated stood,
Like Teneriff or Atlas, unremoved:[6]
His stature reached the sky,[7] and on his crest
Sat horror plumed; nor wanted[8] in his grasp

[1] Award, decree. [2] Cf. Rev. xx. 3.
[3] *i. e.* who darest to set limits to my movements.
[4] Pointed towards h
[5] Cf. Hom. Il. ii.:—

"And as on corn when western gusts descend,
Before the blast the lofty harvests bend:
Thus o'er the field the moving host appears,
With nodding plumes and groves of waving spears."
Pope.

[6] Virgil, Æn. xii.:—

"Like Eryx, or like Athos great, he shows,
Or father Apennine, when white with snows,
His head divine obscure in clouds he hides,
And shakes the sounding forest on his side."—*Dryden.*

[7] Cf. Hom. Il. iv. 443; Virg. Æn. iv. 177, and Wisdom xviii. 16.
[8] Although he had only just resumed his natural form.

What seemed both spear and shield. Now dreadful deeds
Might have ensued; not only Paradise,
In this commotion, but the starry cope
Of Heaven, perhaps, or all the elements
At least had gone to wrack, disturbed and torn
With violence of this conflict, had not soon
The Eternal, to prevent such horrid fray,
Hung forth in Heaven his golden scales, yet seen
Betwixt Astrea and the Scorpion sign,
Wherein all things created first he weighed,
The pendulous round earth with balanced air
In counterpoise; now ponders all events,
Battles and realms: in these he put two weights,
The sequel each of parting and of fight;
The latter quick up flew, and kicked the beam;[1]
Which Gabriel spying, thus bespake the fiend:
"Satan, I know thy strength, and thou know'st mine,
Neither our own, but given; what folly, then,
To boast what arms can do, since thine no more
Than Heaven permits, nor mine, though doubled now
To trample thee as mire! For proof look up,
And read thy lot in yon celestial sign,
Where thou art weighed, and shown how light, how weak,[2]
If thou resist. The fiend looked up, and knew
His mounted scale aloft: nor more; but fled
Murmuring, and with him fled the shades of night.

[1] Bentley, and probably many others, have misunderstood Milton's thought about the scales, judging of it by what they read of Jupiter's scales in Homer and Virgil; the account of which is very different from this of Milton; for in them the fates of the two combatants are weighed one against the other, and the descent of one of the scales foreshowed the death of him whose fate lay in that scale, *quo vergat pondere lethum*: whereas, in Milton, nothing is weighed but what relates to Satan only, and in the two scales are weighed the two different events of his retreating and his fighting. From what has been said it may appear pretty plainly, that Milton by "sequel" meant the consequence or "event," as it is expressed in ver. 1001, and then there will be no occasion for Dr. Bentley's "signal;" both because it is a very improper word in this place, and because a "signal of parting and of fight" can be nothing else than a signal when to part and when to fight; which he will not pretend to be the poet's meaning.—*Pearce.*

[2] He does not make the ascending scale the sign of victory, as in Homer and Virgil, but of lightness and weakness, according to that of Belshazzar, Dan. v. 27, "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." So true it is, that Milton oftener imitates Scripture than Homer and Virgil, even where he is thought to imitate them most

BOOK V.

THE ARGUMENT.

Morning approached, Eve relates to Adam her troublèsome dream; he likes it not, yet comforts her: they come forth to their day labours: their morning hymn at the door of their bower. God, to render man inexcusable, sends Raphael to admonish him of his obedience, of his free estate, of his enemy near at hand, who he is, and why his enemy, and whatever else may avail Adam to know. Raphael comes down to Paradise; his appearance described; his coming discerned by Adam afar off, sitting at the door of his bower; he goes out to meet him, brings him to his lodge, entertains him with the choicest fruits of Paradise got together by Eve; their discourse at table. Raphael performs his message, minds Adam of his state and of his enemy; relates, at Adam's request, who that enemy is, and how he came to be so, beginning from his first revolt in Heaven, and the occasion thereof; how he drew his legions after him to the parts of the north, and there incited them to rebel with him, persuading all but only Abdiel, a seraph, who in argument dissuades and opposes him, then forsakes him.

Now morn her rosy steps in the eastern clime
Advancing, sowed the earth with orient pearl,
When Adam waked, so customed; for his sleep
Was airy light, from pure digestion bred,
And temperate vapours bland, which[1] the only sound
Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora's fan,
Lightly dispersed, and the shrill matin song
Of birds[2] on every bough, so much the more
His wonder was to find unwakened Eve
With tresses discomposed, and glowing cheek,

[1] Viz., his sleep. The words "only sound," mean "the sound alone." Thyer compares Spenser, F. Q. v. 2, 30: "As if *the only sound* thereof she feared."

[2] "The rattling boughs and leaves their part did bear."—*Fairfax.*

As through unquiet rest: he on his side
Leaning, half raised, with looks of cordial love
Hung over her enamoured, and beheld
Beauty, which, whether waking or asleep,
Shot forth peculiar graces; then with voice
Mild, as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes,[1]
Her hand soft touching, whispered thus: "Awake,
My fairest, my espoused, my latest found,
Heaven's last best gift, my ever-new delight,
Awake; the morning shines, and the fresh field
Calls us; we lose the prime[2] to mark how spring
Our tended plants, how blows the citron grove,
What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy reed,
How nature paints her colours, how the bee
Sits on the bloom extracting liquid sweet."
Such whispering waked her, but with startled eye
On Adam, whom embracing, thus she spake:
"O sole in whom my thoughts find all repose,
My glory, my perfection! glad I see
Thy face, and morn returned; for I this night
(Such night till this I never passed) have dreamed,
If dreamed, not as I oft am wont, of thee,
Works of day past, or morrow's next design,
But of offence and trouble, which my mind
Knew never till this irksome night: methought
Close at mine ear one called me forth to walk,
With gentle voice; I thought it thine; it said,
'Why sleep'st thou, Eve? Now is the pleasant time,
The cool, the silent, save where silence yields
To the night-warbling bird, that now awake
Tunes sweetest his love-laboured song; now reigns
Full orbed the moon, and with more pleasing light
Shadowy sets off the face of things; in vain,
If none regard; Heaven wakes with all his eyes,[3]

[1] For this delightful simile Milton was probably obliged to his admired Ben Jonson in his mask of "Love reconciled to Virtue":—

"The fair will think you do 'em wrong,
Go choose among—but with a mind
As gentle as the stroking wind
Runs o'er the gentler flowers."—Song 3rd.—*Thyer*

[2] *i. e.* the early morning.

[3] Spenser, F. Q. iii. 2, 45:—

"With how many eyes
High Heaven beholds," &c.

Whom to behold but thee, nature's desire.
In whose sight all things joy, with ravishment
Attracted by thy beauty still to gaze.'
I rose as at thy call, but found thee not;
To find thee I directed then my walk;
And on, methought, alone I passed through ways
That brought me on a sudden to the tree
Of interdicted knowledge: fair it seemed,
Much fairer to my fancy than by day:
And as I wondering looked, beside it stood
One shaped and winged like one of those from Heaven
By us oft seen; his dewy locks distilled
Ambrosia; on that tree he also gazed;
And 'O fair plant,' said he, 'with fruit surcharged,
Deigns none to ease thy load, and taste thy sweet,
Nor God, nor man? Is knowledge so despised?
Or envy, or what reserve forbids to taste?
Forbid who will, none shall from me withhold
Longer thy offered good: why else set here?'
This said, he paused not, but with venturous arm
He plucked, he tasted; me damp horror chilled
At such bold words vouched with a deed so bold:
But he thus, overjoyed: 'O fruit divine,
Sweet of thyself, but much more sweet thus cropped;
Forbidden here, it seems, as only fit
For gods, yet able to make gods of men:
And why not gods of men, since good, the more
Communicated, more abundant grows,
The author not impaired, but honoured more?
Here, happy creature, fair angelic Eve,
Partake thou also; happy though thou art,
Happier thou mayst be, worthier canst not be:
Taste this, and be henceforth among the gods
Thyself a goddess, not to earth confined,
But sometimes in the air, as we; sometimes
Ascend to Heaven, by merit thine, and see
What life the gods live there, and such live thou.'
So saying, he drew nigh, and to me held,
Even to my mouth of that same fruit held part
Which he had plucked; the pleasant savoury smell
So quickened appetite, that I, methought,
Could not but taste. Forthwith up to the clouds
With him I flew, and underneath beheld
The earth outstretched immense, a prospect wide

And various: wondering at my flight and change
To this high exaltation, suddenly
My guide was gone, and I, methought, sunk down,
And fell asleep; but oh, how glad I waked
To find this but a dream!" Thus Eve her night
Related, and thus Adam answered sad:
"Best image of myself, and dearer half,
The trouble of thy thoughts this night in sleep
Affects me equally; nor can I like
This uncouth dream, of evil sprung, I fear;
Yet evil whence? in thee can harbour none,
Created pure. But know, that in the soul
Are many lesser faculties, that serve
Reason as chief; among these, fancy next
Her office holds; of all external things,
Which the five watchful senses represent,
She forms imaginations, airy shapes,
Which reason, joining or disjoining, frames
All what we affirm or what deny, and call
Our knowledge or opinion; then retires
Into her private cell when nature rests.
Oft in her absence mimic fancy wakes
To imitate her; but, misjoining shapes,
Wild work produces oft, and most in dreams,
Ill matching words and deeds long past or late.
Some such resemblances methinks I find
Of our last evening's talk, in this thy dream,
But with addition strange; yet be not sad:
Evil into the mind of God or man
May come and go, so unapproved, and leave
No spot or blame behind: which gives me hope
That what in sleep thou didst abhor to dream,
Waking thou never wilt consent to do.
Be not disheartened, then, nor cloud those looks,
That wont to be more cheerful and serene,
Than when fair morning first smiles on the world,
And let us to our fresh employments rise
Among the groves, the fountains, and the flowers
That open now their choicest bosomed smells,
Reserved from night, and kept for thee in store."
So cheered he his fair spouse, and she was cheered,
But silently a gentle tear let fall
From either eye, and wiped them with her hair
Two other precious drops that ready stood,

Each in their crystal sluice, he, ere they fell,
Kissed, as the gracious signs of sweet remorse
And pious awe, that feared to have offended.
So all was cleared, and to the field they haste.
But first, from under shady arborous roof,
Soon as they forth were come to open sight
Of day-spring, and the sun, who scarce up risen,
With wheels yet hovering o'er the ocean brim,
Shot parallel to the earth his dewy ray,
Discovering in wide landscape all the east
Of Paradise and Eden's happy plains,
Lowly they bowed adoring, and began
Their orisons, each morning duly paid
In various style; for neither various style
Nor holy rapture wanted they to praise
Their Maker, in fit strains pronounced or sung
Unmeditated; such prompt eloquence
Flowed from their lips, in prose or numerous verse,
More tuneable than needed lute or harp
To add more sweetness; and they thus began:
"These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,
Almighty! Thine this universal frame,
Thus wondrous fair; thyself how wondrous then,
Unspeakable! who sitt'st above these heavens,
To us invisible, or dimly seen
In these thy lowest works; yet these declare
Thy goodness beyond thought, and power divine
Speak, ye who best can tell, ye sons of light,
Angels; for ye behold him, and with songs
And choral symphonies, day without night,
Circle his throne rejoicing; ye in Heaven,
On earth join all ye creatures to extol
Him first, him last, him midst, and without end.
Fairest of stars, last in the train of night,
If better thou belong not to the dawn,
Sure pledge of day, that crown'st the smiling morn
With thy bright circlet, praise him in thy sphere,
While day arises, that sweet hour of prime.
Thou sun, of this great world both eye and soul,
Acknowledge him thy greater,[1] sound his praise
In thy eternal[2] course, both when thou climb'st,
And when high noon hast gained, and when thou fall'st.

[1] Bentley would read, "acknowledge thy Creator."
[2] *i. e.* continual.

Moon, that now meet'st the orient sun, now fli'st,
With the fixed stars, fixed in their orb that flies,
And ye five other wandering fires that move
In mystic dance not without song,[1] resound
His praise, who out of darkness called up light.
Air, and ye elements, the eldest birth
Of nature's womb, that in quaternion[2] run
Perpetual circle, multiform; and mix
And nourish all things; let your ceaseless change
Vary to our great Maker still new praise.
Ye mists and exhalations that now rise
From hill or steaming lake, dusky or gray,
Till the sun paint your fleecy skirts with gold,
In honour to the world's great Author rise,
Whether to deck with clouds the uncoloured sky,
Or wet the thirsty earth with falling showers,
Rising or falling still advance his praise.
His praise, ye winds, that from four quarters blow,
Breathe soft or loud; and wave your tops, ye pines,
With every plant, in sign of worship wave.
Fountains, and ye that warble as ye flow
Melodious murmurs, warbling tune his praise.
Join voices, all ye living souls;[3] ye birds,
That singing up to Heaven-gate ascend,[4]
Bear on your wings and in your notes his praise.
Ye that in waters glide, and ye that walk
The earth, and stately tread, or lowly creep;
Witness if I be silent, morn or even,
To hill or valley, fountain or fresh shade,
Made vocal by my song, and taught his praise.
Hail, universal Lord! be bounteous still
To give us only good; and if the night
Have gathered aught of evil or concealed,
Disperse it, as now light dispels the dark."

[1] Alluding to the doctrine of the ancients, and particularly to Pythagoras' notion of the music of the spheres, by which no doubt he understood the proportion, regularity, and harmony of their motions. —*Newton.*

[2] *i. e.* that in a fourfold mixture and combination run a perpetual circle, one element continually taking place of another.

[3] "Soul" is used here, as it sometimes is in Scripture, for other creatures besides man. So, Gen. i. 20, "the moving creature that hath "life," that is "soul," in the Hebrew —*Newton.*

[4] So, Cymbeline, act ii.:—

"Hark, hark! the lark at Heaven's gate sings."

So prayed they innocent, and to their thoughts
Firm peace recovered[1] soon, and wonted calm.
On to their morning's rural work they haste
Among sweet dews and flowers; where any row
Of fruit-trees, over-woody, reached too far
Their pampered[2] boughs, and needed hands to check
Fruitless embraces: or they led the vine
To wed her elm; she, spoused, about him twines
Her marriageable arms, and with her brings
Her dower, the adopted clusters, to adorn
His barren leaves. Them thus employed beheld
With pity Heaven's high King, and to him called
Raphael, the sociable spirit, that deigned
To travel with Tobias, and secured
His marriage with the seven-times-wedded maid.
"Raphael," said he, "thou hear'st what stir on earth
Satan, from hell 'scaped through the darksome gulf,
Hath raised in Paradise, and how disturbed
This night the human pair; how he designs
In them at once to ruin all mankind.
Go, therefore, half this day, as friend with friend
Converse with Adam, in what bower or shade
Thou find'st him from the heat of noon retired,
To respite his day labour with repast,
Or with repose; and such discourse bring on,
As may advise him of his happy state,
Happiness in his power left free to will,
Left to his own free will, his will though free,
Yet mutable; whence warn him to beware
He swerve not, too secure: tell him withal
His danger, and from whom; what enemy,
Late fallen himself from Heaven, is plotting now
The fall of others from like state of bliss;
By violence? no, for that shall be withstood:
But by deceit and lies; this let him know,

[1] *i. e.* being recovered.

[2] The propriety of this expression will best be seen by what Junius says of the etymology of the word *pamper*. The French word *pampre*, of the Latin *pampinus*, is a vine branch full of leaves; and a vineyard, he observes, is said by them *pamprer*, when it is overgrown with superfluous leaves and fruitless branches. Gallis *pampre* est pampinus: unde iis *pamprer* dicitur vinea supervacuo pampinorum germine exuberans, ac nimia crescendi luxuria quodammodo sylvescens.—*Newton.*

Lest, wilfully transgressing, he pretend
Surprisal, unadmonished, unforewarned."
So spake the Eternal Father, and fulfilled
All justice: nor delayed the winged saint
After his charge received; but from among
Thousand celestial ardours,[1] where he stood
Veiled with his gorgeous wings, up springing light
Flew through the midst of Heaven; the angelic quires,
On each hand parting, to his speed gave way
Through all the empyreal road; till at the gate
Of Heaven arrived, the gate self-opened wide
On golden hinges turning, as by work
Divine the sovran Architect had framed.
From hence no cloud, or, to obstruct his sight,
Star interposed,[2] however small he sees,
Not unconform to other shining globes,
Earth and the garden of God, with cedars crowned
Above all hills. As when by night the glass
Of Galileo, less assured,[3] observes
Imagined lands and regions in the moon:
Or pilot, from amidst the Cyclades
Delos or Samos first appearing, kens
A cloudy spot. Down thither prone in flight
He speeds, and through the vast ethereal sky
Sails between worlds and worlds, with steady wing,
Now on the polar winds, then with quick fan
Winnows the buxom[4] air; till within soar
Of towering eagles, to all the fowls he seems
A phœnix, gazed by all, as that sole bird,
When, to enshrine his relics in the sun's
Bright temple, to Egyptian Thebes he flies.
At once on the eastern[5] cliff of Paradise
He lights, and to his proper shape returns
A seraph winged: six wings he wore, to shade
His lineaments divine; the pair that clad
Each shoulder broad, came mantling o'er his breast
With regal ornament; the middle pair
Girt like a starry zone his waist and round
Skirted his loins and thighs with downy gold,
And colours dipped in Heaven; the third his feet

[1] Seraphim, that word, like "ardours," being derived from a word signifying *to burn*, and therefore expressing zeal, fervency.
[2] *i. e.* being interposed. Cf. v. 210. [3] *i. e.* than the angel was.
[4] Yielding, flexible. [5] Where the entrance to Paradise was.

Shadowed from either heel with feathered mail,
Sky-tinctured grain. Like Maia's son he stood,
And shook his plumes, that heavenly fragrance filled
The circuit wide. Straight knew him all the bands
Of angels under watch; and to his state,
And to his message high, in honour rise;
For on some message high they guessed him bound.
Their glittering tents he passed, and now is come
Into the blissful field, through groves of myrrh,
And flowering odours, cassia, nard, and balm;
A wilderness of sweets; for Nature here
Wantoned as in her prime, and played at will
Her virgin fancies, pouring forth more sweet,
Wild above rule or art; enormous bliss.
Him through the spicy forest onward come,
Adam discerned, as in the door he sat
Of his cool bower, while now the mounted sun
Shot down direct his fervid rays to warm
Earth's inmost womb, more warmth than Adam needs:
And Eve within, due at her hour prepared
For dinner savoury fruits, of taste to please
True appetite, and not disrelish thirst
Of nectarous draughts between, from milky stream,
Berry or grape:[1] to whom thus Adam called:
"Haste hither, Eve, and worth thy sight behold
Eastward among those trees, what glorious shape
Comes this way moving; seems another morn
Risen on mid-noon; some great behest from Heaven
To us, perhaps, he brings, and will vouchsafe
This day to be our guest. But go with speed,
And what thy stores contain bring forth, and pour
Abundance, fit to honour and receive
Our heavenly stranger: well we may afford
Our givers their own gifts, and large bestow
From large bestowed, where Nature multiplies
Her fertile growth, and by disburdening grows
More fruitful, which instructs us not to spare."
To whom thus Eve. "Adam, earth's hallowed mould,
Of God inspired, small store will serve, where store,
All seasons, ripe for use hangs on the stalk;
Save what by frugal storing firmness gains

[1] Noah is, however, supposed to have been the inventor of wine Milton probably means the unfermented juice expressed from fruits.

To nourish, and superfluous moist consumes:
But I will haste, and from each bough and brake,
Each plant and juciest gourd, will pluck such choice
To entertain our angel-guest, as he
Beholding shall confess, that here on earth
God hath dispensed his bounties as in Heaven"
So saying, with despatchful looks, in haste
She turns, on hospitable thoughts intent
What choice to choose for delicacy best,
What order, so contriv'd as not to mix
Tastes, not well joined, inelegant, but bring
Taste after taste upheld with kindliest change;
Bestirs her then, and from each tender stalk
Whatever earth, all-bearing mother, yields
In India, East or West, or middle shore
In Pontus, or the Punic coast, or where
Alcinous reign'd, fruit of all kinds, in coat
Rough, or smooth rind, or bearded husk, or shell,
She gathers, tribute large, and on the board
Heaps with unsparing hand; for drink, the grape
She crushes, inoffensive must,[1] and meaths[2]
From many a berry, and from sweet kernels pressed
She tempers dulcet creams; nor these to hold
Wants her fit vessels pure; then strews the ground
With rose and odours from the shrub unfumed.
Meanwhile our primitive great sire, to meet
His godlike guest, walks forth, without more train
Accompanied than with his own complete
Perfections; in himself was all his state,
More solemn than the tedious pomp that waits
On princes, when their rich retinue long
Of horses led, and grooms besmeared with gold,
Dazzles the crowd, and sets them all agape.
Nearer his presence Adam, though not awed,
Yet with submiss approach and reverence meek
As to a superior nature, bowing low,
Thus said: "Native of Heaven, for other place
None can, than Heaven, such glorious shape contain
Since, by descending from the thrones above,
Those happy places thou hast deigned awhile
To want, and honour these, vouchsafe with us
Two only, who yet by sovran gift possess

[1] Mustum, new wine. [2] Sweet drinks, like mead.

This spacious ground, in yonder shady bower
To rest, and what the garden choicest bears
To sit and taste, till this meridian heat
Be over, and the sun more cool decline."
Whom thus the angelic virtue answered mild:
"Adam, I therefore came, nor art thou such
Created, or such place hast here to dwell,
As may not oft invite, though spirits of Heaven,
To visit thee; lead on, then, where thy bower
O'ershades; for these mid-hours, till evening rise,
I have at will." So to the sylvan lodge
They came, that like Pomona's arbour smiled
With flowerets decked and fragrant smells; but Eve,
Undecked save with herself, more lovely fair
Than wood-nymph, or the fairest goddess feigned
Of three that in mount Ida naked strove,[1]
Stood to entertain her guest from Heaven; no veil
She needed, virtue-proof; no thought infirm
Altered her cheek. On whom the angel "Hail!"
Bestowed, the holy salutation used
Long after to blest Mary, second Eve:
"Hail, mother of mankind! whose fruitful womb
Shall fill the world more numerous with thy sons,
Than with these various fruits the trees of God
Have heaped this table." Raised of grassy turf
Their table was, and mossy seats had round,
And on her ample square, from side to side,
All autumn[2] piled, though spring and autumn here
Danced hand in hand. A while, discourse they hold,
No fear lest dinner cool; when thus began
Our author: "Heavenly stranger, please to taste
These bounties, which our Nourisher, from whom
All perfect good, unmeasured out, descends,
To us for food and for delight hath caused
The earth to yield: unsavoury food, perhaps,
To spiritual natures; only this I know,
That one celestial Father gives to all."
To whom the angel: "Therefore, what he gives
(Whose praise be ever sung) to man, in part
Spiritual, may of purest spirits be found

[1] Alluding to the contest of Juno, Minerva, and Venus, for the prize of beauty.

[2] All the fruits of autumn.

No ingrateful food:[1] and food alike those pure
Intelligential substances require,
As doth your rational; and both contain
Within them every lower faculty
Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste,
Tasting concoct, digest, assimilate,
And corporeal to incorporeal turn.
For know, whatever was created, needs
To be sustained and fed; of elements
The grosser feeds the purer, earth the sea,
Earth and the sea feed air, the air those fires
Ethereal, and, as lowest, first the moon;
Whence in her visage round those spots, unpurged
Vapours not yet into her substance turned.[2]
Nor doth the moon no nourishment exhale
From her moist continent to higher orbs.
The sun, that light imparts to all, receives
From all his alimental recompense
In humid exhalations, and at even
Sups with the ocean. Though in Heaven the trees
Of life ambrosial fruitage bear, and vines[3]
Yield nectar; though from off the boughs each morn
We brush mellifluous dews, and find the ground
Covered with pearly grain: yet God hath here
Varied his bounty so with new delights,
As may compare with Heaven; and to taste,
Think not I shall be nice." So down they sat,
And to their viands fell; nor seemingly
The angel, nor in mist, the common gloss
Of theologians;[4] but with keen despatch

[1] There being mention made in Scripture of "angel's food," Psal. lxxviii. 25, that is foundation enough for a poet to build upon, and advance these notions of the angels eating.—*Newton.*

[2] We must, throughout these passages, charitably bear in mind the fact that Milton was a poet, not a philosopher.

[3] In mentioning "trees of life," and "vines" in Heaven, he is justified by Scripture. See Rev. xxii. 2; Matt. xxvi. 29. As in speaking afterwards of "mellifluous dews" and "pearly grain," he manifestly alludes to manna, which is called "the bread of heaven," Psal. cv. 40; "And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground," Exod. xvi. 14; "and it was like coriander-seed, white; and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey," ver. 31.—*Newton.*

[4] The usual comment and exposition of divines. For several of the fathers were of opinion that the angels did not really eat, but only seemed so to do.—*Newton.*

Of real hunger, and concoctive heat
To transubstantiate: what redounds, transpires
Through spirits with ease; nor wonder, if by fire
Of sooty coal the empiric alchemist
Can turn, or holds it possible to turn,
Metals of drossiest ore to perfect gold,
As from the mine. Meanwhile at table, Eve
Ministered naked, and their flowing cups
With pleasant liquors crowned:[1] O innocence
Deserving Paradise! If ever, then,
Then had the sons of God excuse to have been
Enamoured[2] at that sight; but in those hearts
Love unlibidinous reigned, nor jealousy
Was understood, the injured lover's hell.
Thus when with meats and drinks they had sufficed,
Not burdened nature, sudden mind arose
In Adam, not to let the occasion pass,
Given him by this great conference, to know
Of things above his world, and of their being
Who dwell in Heaven, whose excellence he saw
Transcend his own so far, whose radiant forms,
Divine effulgence, whose high power, so far
Exceeded human; and his wary[3] speech
Thus to the empyreal minister he framed:
"Inhabitant with God, now know I well
Thy favour, in this honour done to man,
Under whose lowly roof thou hast vouchsafed
To enter, and these earthly fruits to taste,
Food not of angels, yet accepted so,
As that more willingly thou couldst not seem
At Heaven's high feasts to have fed: yet what compare?"
To whom the wingéd hierarch replied:
"O Adam, one Almighty is, from whom
All things proceed, and up to him return,
If not depraved from good, created all
Such to perfection,[4] one first matter all,
Endued with various forms, various degrees
Of substance, and in things that live, of life;
But more refined, more spirituous, and pure,

[1] *i. e.* filled to the brim. [2] An allusion to Genes. vi. 2.
[3] He was afraid to ask such questions directly, and therefore tempered his speech with caution and modesty.
[4] *i. e.* not absolutely good, but perfect in their different kinds and degrees.

As nearer to him placed or nearer tending,[1]
Each in their several active spheres assigned,
Till body up to spirit work, in bounds
Proportioned to each kind. So from the root
Springs lighter the green stalk, from thence the leaves
More airy, last the bright consummate flower
Spirits odorous breathes: flowers and their fruit,
Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublimed,
To vital spirits aspire, to animal,
To intellectual; give both life and sense,
Fancy and understanding; whence the soul
Reason receives, and reason is her being,
Discursive,[2] or intuitive; discourse
Is oftest yours, the latter most is ours,
Differing but in degree, of kind the same
Wonder not, then, what God for you saw good,
If I refuse not, but convert, as you,
To proper substance: time may come, when men
With angels may participate, and find
No inconvenient diet, nor too light fare;
And from these corporal nutriments, perhaps,
Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit,
Improved by tract of time, and winged ascend
Ethereal, as we; or may, at choice,
Here or in heavenly Paradises dwell;
If ye be found obedient, and retain
Unalterably firm his love entire,
Whose progeny you are.[3] Meanwhile, enjoy
Your fill what happiness this happy state
Can comprehend, incapable of more."
To whom the patriarch of mankind replied:
"O favourable spirit, propitious guest,
Well hast thou taught the way that might direct
Our knowledge, and the scale of nature set
From centre to circumference, whereon,
In contemplation of created things,

[1] So Spenser, in his "Hymn of Heavenly Beauty," speaking of the earth, the air, and above that the pure crystalline—

"By view whereof it plainly may appear,
That still as everything doth upward tend,
And farther is from earth, so still more clear
And fair it grows,' &c. *Thyer.*

[2] *i. e.* inferential, argumentative.

[3] Acts xvii. 28, "For we are also his offspring," from Aratus.

By steps we may ascend to God. But say,
What meant that caution joined, 'if ye be found
Obedient?' Can we want obedience then
To him, or possibly his love desert,
Who formed us from the dust, and placed us here,
Full to the utmost measure of what bliss
Human desires can seek or apprehend?"
To whom the angel: "Son of Heaven and earth,
Attend: that thou art happy, owe to God;
That thou continuest such, owe to thyself,
That is, to thy obedience; therein stand.
This was that caution given thee; be advised
God made thee perfect, not immutable;
And good he made thee, but to persevere
He left it in thy power; ordained thy will,
By nature free, not over-ruled by fate
Inextricable, or strict necessity:
Our voluntary service he requires,
Not our necessitated; such with him
Finds no acceptance, nor can find; for how
Can hearts, not free, be tried whether they serve
Willing or no, who will but what they must
By destiny, and can no other choose?
Myself, and all the angelic host, that stand
In sight of God enthroned, our happy state
Hold, as you yours, while our obedience holds;
On other surety none: freely we serve,
Because we freely love, as in our will
To love or not; in this we stand or fall:
And some are fallen, to disobedience fallen,
And so from Heaven to deepest Hell; O fall
From what high state of bliss, into what woe!"
To whom our great progenitor: "Thy words
Attentive, and with more delighted ear,
Divine instructor, I have heard, than when
Cherubic songs by night from neighbouring hills
Aërial music send: nor knew I not
To be both will and deed created free;
Yet that we never shall forget to love
Our Maker, and obey him, whose command
Single is yet so just, my constant thoughts
Assured me, and still assure: though what thou tell'st
Hath passed in Heaven, some doubt within me move.
But more desire to hear, if thou consent

The full relation, which must needs be strange,
Worthy of sacred silence to be heard;
And we have yet large day, for scarce the sun
Hath finished half his journey, and scarce begins
His other half in the great zone of Heaven."
Thus Adam made request; and Raphaël,
After short pause assenting, thus began:
"High matter thou enjoin'st me, O prime of men,
Sad task and hard; for how shall I relate
To human sense the invisible exploits
Of warring spirits? how, without remorse,
The ruin of so many glorious once
And perfect while they stood? how last unfold
The secrets of another world, perhaps
Not lawful to reveal? yet for thy good
This is dispensed; and what surmounts the reach
Of human sense, I shall delineate so,
By likening spiritual to corporal forms,
As may express them best; though what if earth
Be but the shadow of Heaven, and things therein
Each to other like, more than on earth is thought?
"As yet this world was not, and Chaos wild [rests
Reigned where these Heavens now roll, where earth now
Upon her centre poised; when on a day
(For time, though in eternity, applied
To motion, measures all things durable
By present, past, and future), on such day
As Heaven's great year[1] brings forth the empyreal host
Of angels, by imperial summons called,
Innumerable before the Almighty's throne
Forthwith from all the ends of Heaven appeared
Under their hierarchs in orders bright;
Ten thousand thousand ensigns high advanced,
Standards and gonfalons[2] 'twixt van and rear
Stream in the air, and for distinction serve
Of hierarchies, of orders, and degrees;[3]

[1] Plato's great year of the heavens is the revolution of all the spheres. Everything returns to where it set out when their motion first began.—*Richardson.*

[2] A kind of streamer.

[3] That there were different grades of angels in Heaven seems sufficiently evident from Scripture, although the speculations of the Fathers (especially of the Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagita on the subject) are of little value.

Or in their glittering tissues bear emblazed
Holy memorials, acts of zeal and love
Recorded eminent. Thus when in orbs
Of circuit inexpressible they stood,
Orb within orb, the Father infinite,
By whom in bliss embosomed sat the Son.
Amidst as from a flaming mount, whose top
Brightness had made invisible,[1] thus spake:
"'Hear all ye angels, progeny of light.
Thrones, dominations, princedoms, virtues, powers,
Hear my decree, which unrevoked shall stand.
This day I have begot[2] whom I declare
My only Son, and on this holy hill
Him have anointed, whom ye now behold
At my right hand; your head I him appoint,
And by myself have sworn to him shall bow
All knees in Heaven, and shall confess him Lord.
Under his great vicegerent reign abide
United as one individual soul,
For ever happy: him who disobeys,
Me disobeys, breaks union, and that day,
Cast out from God and blesséd vision, falls
Into utter darkness, deep engulfed, his place
Ordained without redemption, without end.'
"So spake the Omnipotent, and with his words
All seemed well pleased; all seemed, but were not all
That day, as other solemn days, they spent
In song and dance about the sacred hill;
Mystical dance, which yonder starry sphere
Of planets and of fixed in all her wheels
Resembles nearest, mazes intricate,
Eccentric, intervolved, yet regular
Then most, when most irregular they seem,
And in their motions harmony divine
So smoothes her charming tones, that God's own ear
Listens delighted. Evening now approached
(For we have also our evening and our morn,
We ours for change delectable, not need);
Forthwith from dance to sweet repast they turn
Desirous; all in circles as they stood,
Tables are set, and on a sudden piled
With angels' food, and rubied nectar flows

[1] Cf. vi. 380.
[2] Ps. ii. 6, sq.; Genes. xxii. 16; Phil. ii. 10, sq.

In pearl, in diamond, and massy gold,
Fruit of delicious vines, the growth of Heaven.
On flowers reposed, and with fresh flowerets crowned,
They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet
Quaff immortal joy, and joy, secure
Of surfeit where full measure only bounds
Excess, before the all-bounteous King, who showered
With copious hand, rejoicing in their joy.
Now when ambrosial night, with clouds exhaled
From that high mount of God, whence light and shade
Spring both, the face of brightest Heaven had changed
To grateful twilight (for night comes not there
In darker veil), and roseate dews disposed
All but the unsleeping eyes of God to rest;
Wide over all the plain, and wider far
Than all this globous earth in plain outspread
(Such are the courts of God), the angelic throng,
Dispersed in bands and files, their camp extend
By living streams among the trees of life,
Pavilions numberless, and sudden reared,
Celestial tabernacles, where they slept,
Fanned with cool winds; save those who in their course
Melodious hymns about the sovereign throne
Alternate all night long: but not so waked
Satan; so call him now, his former name
Is heard no more in Heaven; he of the first,
If not the first archangel, great in power,
In favour and pre-eminence, yet fraught
With envy against the Son of God, that day
Honoured by his great Father, and proclaimed
Messiah King anointed, could not bear
Through pride that sight, and thought himself impaired.
Deep malice thence conceiving and disdain,
Soon as midnight brought on the dusky hour
Friendliest to sleep and silence, he resolved
With all his legions to dislodge, and leave
Unworshipped, unobeyed, the throne supreme,
Contemptuous; and his next subordinate
Awakening, thus to him in secret spake:
" 'Sleep'st thou,[1] companion dear? What sleep can close
Thy eye-lids, and rememberest what decree
Of yesterday, so late hath passed the lips
Of Heaven's Almighty? Thou to me thy thoughts

[1] From Homer, Il. ii 23.

Wast wont, I mine to thee was wont to impart;
Both waking we were one; how then can now
Thy sleep dissent? New laws thou seest imposed;
New laws from him who reigns, new minds may raise
In us who serve, new counsels, to debate
What doubtful may ensue: more in this place
To utter is not safe Assemble thou
Of all those myriads which we lead the chief;
Tell them that by command, ere yet dim night
Her shadowy cloud withdraws, I am to haste,
And all who under me their banners wave,
Homeward with flying march where we possess
The quarters of the north; there to prepare
Fit entertainment to receive our King,
The great Messiah, and his new commands,
Who speedily through all the hierarchies
Intends to pass triumphant, and give laws.'

"So spake the false archangel, and infused
Bad influence into the unwary breast
Of his associate: he together calls,
Or several one by one, the regent powers,
Under him regent; tells, as he was taught,
That the Most High commanding, now ere night,
Now ere dim night had disencumbered Heaven,
The great hierarchal standard was to move;
Tells the suggested cause, and casts between
Ambiguous words and jealousies, to sound
Or taint integrity: but all obeyed
The wonted signal, and superior voice
Of their great potentate; for great indeed
His name, and high was his degree in Heaven,
His countenance, as the morning-star that guides
The starry flock, allured them, and with lies
Drew after him the third part[1] of Heaven's host.
Meanwhile the eternal eye, whose sight discerns
Abstrusest thoughts, from forth his holy mount,
And from within the golden lamps that burn
Nightly before him, saw without their light
Rebellion rising; saw in whom, how spread
Among the sons of morn, what multitudes
Were banded to oppose his high decree;
And, smiling,[2] to his only Son thus said:

"'Son, thou in whom my glory I behold

[1] Rev. xii. 3, sq. [2] Cf. Ps. ii. 1, sqq.

In full resplendence, heir of all my might,
Nearly it now concerns us to be sure
Of our omnipotence, and with what arms
We mean to hold what anciently we claim
Of deity or empire; such a foe
Is rising, who intends to erect his throne
Equal to ours, throughout the spacious north;
Nor so content, hath in his thought to try
In battle, what our power is, or our right.
Let us advise, and to this hazard draw
With speed what force is left, and all employ
In our defence, lest unawares we lose
This our high place, our sanctuary, our hill.'
"To whom the Son, with calm aspect and clear,
Lightning divine,[1] ineffable, serene,
Made answer: 'Mighty Father, thou thy foes
Justly hast in derision, and secure
Laugh'st at their vain designs and tumults vain,
Matter to me of glory, whom their hate
Illustrates, when they see all regal power
Given me to quell their pride, and in event
Know whether I be dexterous to subdue
Thy rebels, or be found the worst in Heaven.'
"So spake the Son; but Satan with his powers
Far was advanced on winged speed, an host
Innumerable as the stars of night,
Or stars of morning, dew-drops, which the sun
Impearls on every leaf and every flower.
Regions they passed, the mighty regencies
Of seraphim, and potentates, and thrones,
In their triple degrees; regions to which
All thy dominion, Adam, is no more
Than what this garden is to all the earth,
And all the sea, from one entire globose
Stretched into longitude; which having passed,
At length into the limits of the north
They came, and Satan to his royal seat,
High on a hill, far blazing, as a mount
Raised on a mount, with pyramids and towers,
From diamond quarries hewn, and rocks of gold;
The palace of great Lucifer (so call
That structure in the dialect of men
Interpreted), which not long after, he

[1] *i. e.* bright, clear as lightning. Cf. Dan. x 6; Matt. xxviii. 3.

Affecting all equality with God,
In imitation of that mount whereon
Messiah was declared in sight of Heaven,
The Mountain of the Congregation[1] called;
For thither he assembled all his train,
Pretending so commanded to consult
About the great reception of their King
Thither to come, and with calumnious art
Of counterfeited truth thus held their ears:
"'Thrones, dominations, princedoms, virtues, powers,
If these magnific titles yet remain
Not merely titular, since by decree
Another now hath to himself engrossed
All power, and us eclipsed, under the name
Of King anointed, for whom all this haste
Of midnight march, and hurried meeting here,
This only to consult; how we may best,
With what may be devised of honours new,
Receive him coming to receive from us
Knee-tribute yet unpaid, prostration vile,
Too much to one, but double how endured,
To one and to his image now proclaimed?
But what if better counsels might erect
Our minds, and teach us to cast off this yoke?
Will ye submit your necks, and choose to bend
The supple knee? Ye will not, if I trust
To know ye right, or if ye know yourselves,
Natives and sons of Heaven, possessed before
By none, and if not equal all, yet free,
Equally free; for orders and degrees
Jar not with liberty, but well consist.[2]
Who can in reason then, or right, assume[3]
Monarchy over such as live by right
His equals, if in power and splendour less,
In freedom equal? or can introduce
Law and edict on us, who, without law,
Err not? much less for this to be our Lord,
And look for adoration, to the abuse

[1] Isa. xiv. 13.

[2] *i. e.* agree.

[3] *i. e* who can assume monarchy, &c., much less can any one introduce law . . . or that this one (*i. e.* the Messiah, as in v. 775, 777) to be our Lord, and seek adoration by the abuse of these titles, &c. The passage is, however, far from satisfactory, and has given rise to much discussion.

Of those imperial titles, which assert
Our being ordained to govern, not to serve.'
" Thus far his bold discourse without control
Had audience, when among the seraphim
Abdiel, than whom none with more zeal adored
The Deity, and divine commands obeyed,
Stood up, and in a flame of zeal severe,
The current of his fury thus opposed:
" ' Oh, argument blasphémous, false and proud!
Words which no ear ever to hear in Heaven
Expected, least of all from thee, ingrate,
In place thyself so high above thy peers.
Canst thou with impious obloquy condemn
The just decree of God, pronounced and sworn,
That to his only Son, by right endued
With regal sceptre, every soul in Heaven
Shall bend the knee, and in that honour due
Confess him rightful King? unjust, thou sayest,
Flatly unjust, to bind with laws the free,
And equal over equals to let reign,
One over all with unsucceeded power.
Shalt thou give law to God? shalt thou dispute
With him the points of liberty, who made
Thee what thou art, and formed the powers of Heaven
Such as he pleased, and circumscribed their being?
Yet, by experience taught, we know how good,
And of our good and of our dignity
How provident he is, how far from thought
To make us less, bent rather to exalt
Our happy state under one head more near
United. But to grant it thee unjust,
That equal over equals monarch reign:
Thyself, though great and glorious, dost thou count,
Or all angelic nature joined in one,
Equal to him begotten Son? by whom,
As by his Word, the mighty Father made
All things, even thee; and all the spirits of Heaven
By him created in their bright degrees,
Crowned them with glory, and to their glory named
Thrones, dominations, princedoms, virtues, powers,
Essential powers; nor by his reign obscured,
But more illustrious made; since he the head,
One of our number thus reduced becomes;
His laws our laws; all honour to him done

Returns our own. Cease then this impious rage,
And tempt not these, but hasten to appease
The incensed Father, and the incensed Son,
While pardon may be found in time besought.
" So spake the fervent angel; but his zeal
None seconded, as out of season judged,
Or singular and rash; whereat rejoiced
The apostate, and more haughty thus replied:
" ' That we were formed then, sayest thou? and the work
Of secondary hands, by task transferred
From Father to his Son? strange point and new!
Doctrine which we would know whence learned: who saw
When this creation was? rememberest thou
Thy making, while the Maker gave thee being?
We know no time when we were not as now;
Know none before us, self-begot, self-raised
By our own quickening power, when fatal course
Had circled his full orb, the birth mature
Of this our native Heaven, ethereal sons.
Our puissance is our own; our own right hand
Shall teach us highest deeds, by proof to try
Who is our equal: then thou shalt behold
Whether by supplication we intend
Address, and to begirt the almighty throne
Beseeching or besieging. This report,
These tidings carry to the anointed King;
And fly, ere evil intercept thy flight.'
" He said, and as the sound of waters deep,
Hoarse murmur echoed to his words applause
Through the infinite host; nor less for that
The flaming seraph fearless, though alone,
Encompassed round with foes, thus answered bold:
" ' O alienate from God, O spirit accursed,
Forsaken of all good! I see thy fall
Determined, and thy hapless crew involved
In this perfidious fraud, contagion spread
Both of thy crime and punishment: henceforth
No more be troubled how to quit the yoke
Of God's Messiah; those indulgent laws
Will not be now vouchsafed; other decrees
Against thee are gone forth without recall;
That golden sceptre, which thou didst reject,
Is now an iron rod to bruise and break
Thy disobedience. Well thou didst advise;

Yet not for thy advice or threats I fly
These wicked tents devoted, lest[1] the wrath
Impendent, raging into sudden flame,
Distinguish not; for soon expect to feel
His thunder on thy head, devouring fire
Then who created thee lamenting learn,
When who can uncreate thee thou shalt know.'
"So spake the seraph Abdiel, faithful found
Among the faithless, faithful only he;
Among innumerable false, unmoved,
Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified,
His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal;
Nor number, nor example, with him wrought
To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,
Though single From amidst them forth he passed,
Long way through hostile scorn, which he sustained
Superior, nor of violence feared aught;
And with retorted scorn his back he turned
On those proud towers to swift destruction doomed

[1] *i. e.* but I fly lest.

END OF THE FIFTH BOOK.

BOOK VI.

THE ARGUMENT.

Raphael continues to relate how Michael and Gabriel were sent forth to battle against Satan and his angels. The first fight described: Satan and his powers retire under night: he calls a council, invents devilish engines, which, in the second day's fight, put Michael and his angels to some disorder; but they at length, pulling up mountains, overwhelmed both the force and machines of Satan: yet the tumult not so ending, God on the third day sends Messiah his Son, for whom he had reserved the glory of that victory: he, in the power of his Father, coming to the place, and causing all his legions to stand still on either side, with his chariot and thunder driving into the midst of his enemies, pursues them, unable to resist, towards the wall of Heaven; which opening, they leap down with horror and confusion into the place of punishment prepared for them in the deep: Messiah returns with triumph to his Father.

"All night the dreadless angel, unpursued,
Through Heaven's wide champain held his way; till morn,
Waked by the circling hours,[1] with rosy hand
Unbarred the gates of light. There is a cave
Within the mount of God, fast by his throne,
Where light and darkness in perpetual round
Lodge and dislodge by turns, which makes through Heaven
Grateful vicissitudes like day and night;
Light issues forth, and at the other door
Obsequious darkness enters, till her hour

Homer, Il. v.:—

"Heaven's golden gates, kept by the wingéd hours;
Commissioned in alternate watch they stand,
The sun's bright portals and the skies command,
Involve in clouds the eternal gates of day,
Or the dark barrier roll with ease away." *Pope.*

To veil the heaven, though darkness there might well
Seem twilight here; and now went forth the morn,
Such as in highest Heaven, arrayed in gold
Empyreal; from before her vanished night,
Shot through with orient beams; when all the plain,
Covered with thick embattled squadrons bright,
Chariots and flaming arms, and fiery steeds,
Reflecting blaze on blaze, first met his view:
War he perceived, war in procinct,[1] and found
Already known what he for news had thought
To have reported: gladly then he mixed
Among those friendly powers, whom him received
With joy and acclamations loud, that one,
That of so many myriads fallen, yet one
Returned not lost. On to the sacred hill
They led him high applauded, and present
Before the seat supreme; from whence a voice,
From midst a golden cloud thus mild was heard:
" 'Servant of God, well done! well hast thou fought
The better fight, who single hast maintained
Against revolted multitudes the cause
Of truth, in word mightier than they in arms;
And for the testimony of truth hast borne
Universal reproach, far worse to bear
Than violence; for this was all thy care,
To stand approved in sight of God, though worlds
Judged thee perverse: the easier conquest now
Remains thee, aided by this host of friends,
Back on thy foes more glorious to return
Than scorned thou didst depart; and to subdue
By force, who reason for their law refuse;
Right reason for their law, and for their King
Messiah, who by right of merit reigns.
Go, Michael,[2] of celestial armies prince,
And thou in military prowess next,

[1] *In procinctu, i. e.* girt, ready for action.

[2] As this battle of the angels is founded principally on Rev. xii. 7, 8, Michael is rightly made by Milton the leader of the heavenly armies, and the name in Hebrew signifies the "power of God." But it may be censured perhaps as a piece of wrong conduct in the poem, that the commission here given is not executed; they are ordered to "drive" the rebel angels "out from God and bliss," but this is effected at last by the Messiah alone. Some reasons for it are assigned in the speech of God, ver. 680, and in that of the Messiah, ver. 801, in this book.—*Newton.*

Gabriel, lead forth to battle these my sons
Invincible, lead forth my armèd saints
By thousands and by millions ranged for fight,
Equal in number to that godless crew
Rebellious; them with fire and hostile arms
Fearless assault, and to the brow of Heaven
Pursuing, drive them out from God and bliss
Into their place of punishment, the gulf
Of Tartarus, which ready opens wide
His fiery chaos[1] to receive their fall.'
" So spake the sovran voice, and clouds began
To darken all the hill,[2] and smoke to roll
In dusky wreaths, reluctant flames, the sign
Of wrath awaked; nor with less dread the loud
Ethereal trumpet from on high 'gan blow:
At which command the powers militant,
That stood for Heaven, in mighty quadrate joined
Of union irresistible, moved on
In silence their bright legions, to the sound
Of instrumental harmony, that breathed
Heroic ardour to adventurous deeds
Under their godlike leaders, in the cause
Of God and his Messiah. On they move
Indissolubly firm; nor obvious hill,
Nor straitening vale, nor wood, nor stream, divides
Their perfect ranks; for high above the ground[3]
Their march was, and the passive air upbore
Their nimble tread: as when the total kind
Of birds, in orderly array on wing,
Came summoned over Eden to receive
Their names of thee; so over many a tract
Of Heaven they marched, and many a province wide
Tenfold the length of this terrene: at last,
Far in the horizon to the north appeared
From skirt to skirt a fiery region, stretched

[1] " Chaos" may mean any place of confusion; but if we take it strictly, Tartarus, or Hell, was built in Chaos (ii. 1,002), and therefore that part of it, being stored with fire, may not improperly be called " a fiery chaos."—*Newton.*

[2] Cf. Exod. xix. 16, sqq.

[3] Our author attributes the same kind of motion to the angels as the ancients did to their gods; which was gliding through the air without ever touching the ground with their feet, or as Milton elsewhere elegantly expresses it (b. viii. 302), " smooth-sliding without step."—*Newton.*

In battailous aspect, and nearer view
Bristled with upright beams innumerable
Of rigid spears, and helmets thronged, and shields
Various, with boastful argument portrayed,
The banded powers of Satan hasting on
With furious expedition; for they weened
That self-same day by fight, or by surprise,
To win the mount of God, and on his throne
To set the envier of his state, the proud
Aspirer; but their thoughts proved fond and vain
In the midway: though strange to us it seemed
At first, that angel should with angel war,
And in fierce hosting[1] meet, who wont to meet
So oft in festivals of joy and love
Unanimous, as sons of one great Sire,
Hymning the eternal Father. But the shout
Of battle now began, and rushing sound
Of onset, ended soon each milder thought
High in the midst, exalted as a god,
The apostate in his sun-bright chariot sat,
Idol[2] of majesty divine, enclosed
With flaming cherubim and golden shields,
Then lighted from his gorgeous throne; for now,
'Twixt host and host, but narrow space was left,
A dreadful interval, and front to front
Presented stood in terrible array
Of hideous length: before the cloudy van,
On the rough edge[3] of battle ere it joined,
Satan, with vast and haughty strides advanced,
Came towering, armed in adamant and gold;
Abdiel that sight endured not, where he stood
Among the mightiest, bent on highest deeds,
And thus his own undaunted heart explores:[4]
"'O Heaven! that such resemblance of the Highest
Should yet remain, where faith and realty[5]

[1] This word "hosting," seems to have been first coined by our author. It is a very expressive word, and plainly formed from the substantive host. And if ever it is right to make new words, it is when the occasion is so new and extraordinary.—*Newton.*

[2] *i. e.* resemblance, but in a bad sense. [3] See. i. 276.

[4] Homer, Il. xxii.:—

"He stood, and questioned thus his mighty mind."

[5] Loyalty. See Pearce.

Remain not! wherefore should not strength and might
There fail where virtue fails, or weakest prove
Where boldest, though to sight unconquerable?
His puissance, trusting in the Almighty's aid,
I mean to try, whose reason I have tried
Unsound and false; nor is it aught but just,
That he who in debate of truth hath won,
Should win in arms, in both disputes alike
Victor; though brutish that contest and foul,
When reason hath to deal with force, yet so
Most reason is that reason overcome.'

"So pondering, and from his armed peers
Forth stepping opposite, half-way he met
His daring foe, at this prevention more
Incensed, and thus securely him defied:

"'Proud! art thou met? thy hope was to have reached
The height of thy aspiring unopposed,
The throne of God unguarded, and his side
Abandoned at the terror of thy power
Or potent tongue: fool! not to think how vain
Against the Omnipotent to rise in arms;
Who out of smallest things could without end
Have raised incessant armies to defeat
Thy folly; or, with solitary hand,
Reaching beyond all limit, at one blow
Unaided could have finished thee, and whelmed
Thy legions under darkness: but thou seest
All are not of thy train; there be who faith
Prefer, and piety to God, though then
To thee not visible, when I alone
Seemed in thy world erroneous to dissent
From all: my sect thou seest; now learn too late
How few sometimes may know, when thousands err.

"Whom the grand foe, with scornful eye askance,
Thus answered: 'Ill for thee, but in wished hour
Of my revenge, first sought for, thou return'st
From flight, seditious angel! to receive
Thy merited reward, the first assay
Of this right hand provoked, since first that tongue,
Inspired with contradiction, durst oppose
A third part of the gods, in synod met
Their deities to assert; who, while they feel
Vigour divine within them, can allow
Omnipotence to none But well thou com'st

Before thy fellows, ambitious to win
From me some plume, that thy success may show
Destruction to the rest: this pause between
(Unanswered lest thou boast) to let thee know,
At first I thought that liberty and Heaven
To heavenly souls had been all one; but now
I see that most through sloth had rather serve,
Ministering spirits, trained up in feast and song,
Such hast thou armed, the minstrelsy of Heaven,
Servility with freedom to contend,
As both their deeds compared this day shall prove.'

"To whom in brief thus Abdiel stern replied:
'Apostate! still thou err'st, nor end wilt find
Of erring, from the path of truth remote:
Unjustly thou deprav'st it with the name
Of servitude, to serve whom God ordains,
Or nature; God and nature bid the same,
When he who rules is worthiest, and excels
Them whom he governs. This is servitude,
To serve the unwise, or him who hath rebelled
Against his worthier, as thine now serve thee,
Thyself not free, but to thyself enthralled;
Yet lewdly dar'st our ministering upbraid.
Reign thou in Hell thy kingdom; let me serve
In Heaven God ever blest, and his divine
Behests obey, worthiest to be obeyed;
Yet chains in Hell, not realms, expect: meanwhile
From me returned, as erst thou saidst, from flight,
This greeting on thy impious crest receive'

"So saying, a noble stroke he lifted high,
Which hung not, but so swift with tempest fell
On the proud crest of Satan, that no sight,
Nor motion of swift thought, less could his shield,
Such ruin intercept: ten paces huge
He back recoiled; the tenth on bended knee
His massy spear upstayed; as if on earth
Winds under ground, or waters forcing way
Sidelong, had pushed a mountain from his seat,
Half sunk with all his pines. Amazement seized
The rebel thrones, but greater rage to see
Thus foiled their mightiest; ours joy filled, and shout,
Presage of victory, and fierce desire
Of battle: whereat Michaël bid sound
The archangel trumpet; through the vast of Heaven

It sounded, and the faithful armies rung
Hosanna to the Highest; nor stood at gaze
The adverse legions; nor less hideous joined
The horrid shock. Now storming fury rose,
And clamour such as heard in Heaven till now
Was never; arms on armour clashing brayed
Horrible discord, and the madding wheels
Of brazen chariots raged; dire was the noise
Of conflict; overhead the dismal hiss
Of fiery darts[1] in flaming volleys flew,
And flying vaulted either host with fire.
So under fiery cope together rushed
Both battles main, with ruinous assault
And inextinguishable rage. All Heaven
Resounded, and had earth been then, all earth
Had to her centre shook. What wonder, when
Millions of fierce encountering angels fought
On either side, the least of whom could wield
These elements, and arm him with the force
Of all their regions? How much more of power,
Army against army numberless to raise
Dreadful combustion warring, and disturb,
Though not destroy, their happy native seat;
Had not the eternal King omnipotent,
From his strong hold of Heaven, high over-ruled
And limited their might; though numbered such
As each divided legion might have seemed
A numerous host; in strength each armed hand
A legion; led in fight, yet leader seemed
Each warrior, single as in chief, expert
When to advance, or stand, or turn the sway
Of battle, open when, and when to close
The ridges[2] of grim war: no thought of flight;
None of retreat; no unbecoming deed
That argued fear; each on himself relied,
As only in his arm the moment lay
Of victory. Deeds of eternal fame
Were done, but infinite; for wide was spread
That war and various; sometimes on firm ground
A standing fight, then soaring on main wing
Tormented all the air; all air seemed then
Conflicting fire. Long time in even scale

[1] *i. e.* the hissing darts flew.
[2] Ranks, a metaphor taken from a ploughed field.

The battle hung;[1] till Satan, who that day
Prodigious power had shown, and met in arms
No equal, ranging through the dire attack
Of fighting seraphim confused, at length
Saw where the sword of Michael smote, and felled
Squadrons at once; with huge two-handed sway[2]
Brandished aloft, the horrid edge came down
Wide wasting: such destruction to withstand
He hasted, and opposed the rocky orb
Of tenfold adamant, his ample shield,
A vast circumference. At his approach
The great archangel from his warlike toil
Surceased, and glad, as hoping here to end
Intestine war in Heaven, the arch foe subdued,
Or captive dragged in chains, with hostile frown
And visage all inflamed, first thus began:
"'Author of evil, unknown till thy revolt,
Unnamed in Heaven, now plenteous, as thou seest
These acts of hateful strife, hateful to all,
Though heaviest by just measure on thyself
And thy adherents: how hast thou disturbed
Heaven's blessed peace, and into nature brought
Misery, uncreated till the crime
Of thy rebellion! how hast thou instilled
Thy malice into thousands, once upright
And faithful, now proved false! But think not here
To trouble holy rest; Heaven casts thee out
From all her confines. Heaven, the seat of bliss,
Brooks not the works of violence and war.
Hence, then, and evil go with thee along,
Thy offspring, to the place of evil, Hell,
Thou and thy wicked crew; there mingle broils,
Ere this avenging sword begin thy doom,
Or some more sudden vengeance, winged from God,
Precipitate thee with augmented pain.'
"So spake the prince of angels: to whom thus

[1] Homer, Il. xii.:—

"As when two scales are charged with doubtful loads,
So stood the war, till Hector's matchless might
With fates prevailing turned the scale of fight." *Pope.*

[2] It shows how entirely the ideas of chivalry and romance had possessed Milton, to make Michael fight with a *two-handed sword*.—*Warburton.*

The adversary:[1] 'Nor think thou with wind
Of airy threats to awe, whom yet with deeds
Thou canst not. Hast thou turned the least of these
To flight, or if to fall, but that they rise
Unvanquished, easier to transact with me
That thou shouldst hope, imperious, and with threats
To chase me hence? Err not[2] that so shall end
The strife which thou call'st evil, but we style
The strife of glory; which we mean to win,
Or turn this Heaven itself into the Hell
Thou fablest; here, however, to dwell free,
If not to reign: meanwhile thy utmost force,
And join him named Almighty to thy aid;
I fly not, but have sought thee, far and nigh.'
"They ended parle, and both addressed for fight
Unspeakable; for who, though with the tongue
Of angels, can relate, or to what things
Liken on earth conspicuous, that may lift
Human imagination to such height
Of godlike power? for likest gods they seemed,
Stood they or moved, in stature, motion, arms,
Fit to decide the empire of great Heaven.
Now waved their fiery swords, and in the air
Made horrid circles; two broad suns their shields
Blazed opposite, while expectation stood
In horror: from each hand with speed retired,
Where erst was thickest fight, the angelic throng,
And left large field, unsafe within the wind
Of such commotion: such as (to set forth
Great things by small) if, nature's concord broke,
Among the constellations war were sprung,
Two planets, rushing from aspect malign
Of fiercest opposition, in mid sky
Should combat, and their jarring spheres confound.
Together both, with next to almighty arm,
Uplifted imminent; one stroke they aimed
That might determine, and not need repeat,
As not of power at once; nor odds appeared
In might or swift prevention: but the sword
Of Michael, from the armoury of God
Was given him tempered so, that neither keen
Nor solid might resist that edge: it met

[1] The enemy, *par excellence*, the devil.
[2] Mistake not, think not.

The sword of Satan with steep force to smite
Descending, and in half cut sheer; nor stayed,
But with swift wheel reverse, deep entering, shared
All his right side: then Satan first knew pain,
And writhed him to and fro convolved; so sore
The griding sword with discontinuous wound
Passed through him: but the ethereal substance closed,
Not long divisible, and from the gash
A stream of nectarous humour issuing flowed
Sanguine,[1] such as celestial spirits may bleed,
And all his armour stained, erewhile so bright.
Forthwith on all sides to his aid was run
By angels many and strong, who interposed
Defence, while others bore him on their shields
Back to his chariot, where it stood retired
From off the files of war; there they him laid,
Gnashing for anguish and despite and shame,
To find himself not matchless, and his pride
Humbled by such rebuke, so far beneath
His confidence to equal God in power.
Yet soon he healed; for spirits that live throughout
Vital in every part, not as frail man
In entrails, heart or head, liver or reins,
Cannot but by annihilating die;
Nor in their liquid texture mortal wound
Receive, no more than can the fluid air.
All heart they live, all head, all eye, all ear,
All intellect, *all sense; and, as they please,*
They limb *themselves, and colour, shape or size*
Assume, *as likes them best, condense or rare.*[2]
" Meanwhile *in other parts, like deeds deserved*
Memorial, where the might of Gabriel *fought,*

[1] *i. e.* a stream of nectarous humour converted into such liquor as spirits bleed. The same idea is expressed by the Homeric *ichor*, Cf. Il. v.—

" From the clear vein a stream immortal flowed,
Such stream as issues from a wounded god;
Pure emanation! uncorrupted flood;
Unlike our gross, diseased, terrestrial blood;
For not the bread of man their life sustains,
Nor wine's inflaming juice supplies their veins." *Pope.*

The whole passage, as indeed all Milton, abounds with Homeric imitations.

[2] Thin, transparent.

And with fierce ensigns pierced the deep array
Of Moloch, furious king, who him defied,
And at his chariot wheels to drag him bound
Threatened, nor from the Holy One of Heaven
Refrained his tongue blasphémous; but anon,
Down cloven to the waist, with shattered arms
And uncouth[1] pain fled bellowing. On each wing
Uriel and Raphaël his vaunting foe,
Though huge, and in a rock of diamond armed,
Vanquished Adramelech,[2] and Asmadai,[3]
Two potent thrones, that to be less than gods
Disdained, but meaner thoughts learned in their flight,
Mangled with ghastly wounds through plate and mail.
Nor stood unmindful Abdiel to annoy
The atheist crew, but with redoubled blow
Ariel[4] and Arioch,[5] and the violence
Of Ramiel,[6] scorched and blasted, overthrew.
I might relate of thousands, and their names
Eternize here on earth; but those elect
Angels, contented with their fame in Heaven,
Seek not the praise of men: the other sort,
In might though wondrous and in acts of war,
Nor of renown less eager, yet by doom
Cancelled from Heaven and sacred memory,
Nameless in dark oblivion let them dwell.
For strength from truth divided, and from just,
Illaudable,[7] nought merits but dispraise
And ignominy, yet to glory aspires
Vain-glorious, and through infamy seeks fame:
Therefore eternal silence be their doom.
"And now, their mightiest quelled, the battle swerved,[8]
With many an inroad gored; deformèd rout
Entered, and foul disorder; all the ground
With shivered armour strown, and on a heap
Chariot and charioteer lay overturned,

[1] Uncouth, *i. e.* unusual. See Tyrwhitt's Gl. to Chaucer, p. 638, ed. 4to; cf. Spenser, F. Q. i. 11, 20:—

"The piercing steel there wrought a wound full wide,
That with the *uncouth pain* the monster loudly cried."

[2] *Mighty magnificent king*, one of the idols of Sepharvaim, worshipped by them in Samaria, 2 Kings xvii. 31.

[3] Same as Asmodeus, Tobit iii. 8.

[4] *Lions of God.* [5] *A fierce lion.*

[6] *One that exalts himself against God.* [7] Worthless. [8] Gave way.

And fiery foaming steeds; what[1] stood, recoiled
O'er-wearied, through the faint Satanic host
Defensive scarce, or with pale fear surprised,
Then first with fear surprised and sense of pain,
Fled ignominious, to such evil brought
By sin of disobedience, till that hour
Not liable to fear, or flight, or pain.
Far otherwise the inviolable saints,
In cubic[2] phalanx firm advanced entire,
Invulnerable, impenetrably armed;
Such high advantages their innocence
Gave them above their foes, not to have sinned,
Not to have disobeyed; in sight they stood
Unwearied, unobnoxious to be pained
By wound, though from their place by violence moved.
" Now night her course began, and, over Heaven
Inducing darkness, grateful truce imposed,
And silence on the odious din of war:
Under her cloudy covert both retired,
Victor and vanquished: on the foughten field
Michaël and his angels prevalent
Encamping, placed in guard their watches round,
Cherubic waving fires: on the other part
Satan with his rebellious disappeared,
Far in the dark dislodged; and, void of rest,
His potentates to council called by night;
And in the midst thus undismayed began:
" 'O now in danger tried, now known in arms
Not to be overpowered, companions dear,
Found worthy not of liberty alone,
Too mean pretence, but what we more affect,
Honour, dominion, glory, and renown;
Who have sustained one day in doubtful fight
(And if one day, why not eternal days?)
What Heaven's Lord had powerfullest to send
Against us from about his throne, and judged
Sufficient to subdue us to his will,
But proves not so: then fallible, it seems,
Of future we may deem him, though till now
Omniscient thought. True is,[3] less firmly armed,
Some disadvantage we endured, and pain,

[1] Those who.

[2] This epithet must be taken rather as denoting the *compactness* than the *form* of the phalanx

[3] True *it* is.

Till now not known, but, known, as soon contemned;
Since now we find this our empyreal form
Incapable of mortal injury,
Imperishable, and though pierced with wound,
Soon closing, and by native vigour healed.
Of evil then so small as easy think
The remedy; perhaps more valid arms,
Weapons more violent, when next we meet,
May serve to better us, and worse our foes,
Or equal what between us made the odds,
In nature none; if other hidden cause
Left them superior, while we can preserve
Unhurt our minds and understanding sound,
Due search and consultation will disclose.'
" He sat: and in the assembly next upstood
Nisroch,[1] of principalities the prime;
As one he stood escaped from cruel fight,
Sore toiled, his riven arms to havoc hewn,
And cloudy in aspect thus answering spake:
" ' Deliverer from new lords, leader to free
Enjoyment of our right as gods; yet hard
For gods, and too unequal work we find,
Against unequal arms to fight in pain,
Against unpained, impassive; from which evil
Ruin must needs ensue; for what avails
Valour or strength, though matchless, quelled with pain
Which all subdues, and makes remiss the hands
Of mightiest? Sense of pleasure we may well
Spare out of life, perhaps, and not repine,
But live content, which is the calmest life:
But pain is perfect misery, the worst
Of evils,[2] and, excessive, overturns
All patience. He who therefore can invent
With what more forcible we may offend
Our yet unwounded enemies, or arm
Ourselves with like defence, to me[3] deserves
No less than for deliverance what we owe.'

[1] *Great eagle*, an idol of the Ninevites, represented in their sculptures with a hawk's head. See Layard's Nineveh.

[2] Nisroch is made to talk agreeably to the sentiments of Hieronymus, and those philosophers who maintained that pain was the greatest of evils; there might be a possibility of living without pleasure, but there was no living in pain. A notion suitable enough to a deity of the effeminate Assyrians.—*Newton.*

[3] In my opinion.

" Whereto, with look composed, Satan replied:
'Not uninvented that, which thou aright
Believ'st so main to our success, I bring.
Which of us who beholds the bright surface
Of this ethereous mould whereon we stand,
This continent of spacious Heaven, adorned
With plant, fruit, flower ambrosial, gems and gold;
Whose eye so superficially surveys
These things, as not to mind from whence they grow
Deep under ground, materials dark and crude,
Of spirituous and fiery spume, till touched
With Heaven's ray, and tempered, they shoot forth
So beauteous, opening to the ambient light?
These, in their dark nativity, the deep[1]
Shall yield us, pregnant with infernal flame;
Which into hollow engines[2] long and round
Thick-rammed, at the other bore with touch of fire
Dilated and infuriate, shall send forth
From far, with thundering noise, among our foes,
Such implements of mischief, as shall dash
To pieces, and o'erwhelm whatever stands
Adverse, that they shall fear we have disarmed
The Thunderer of his only dreaded bolt.
Nor long shall be our labour; yet, ere dawn,
Effect shall end our wish. Meanwhile revive;
Abandon fear; to strength and counsel joined
Think nothing hard, much less to be despaired.'
" He ended, and his words their drooping cheer
Enlightened, and their languished hope revived.
The invention all admired, and each, how he
To be the inventor missed; so easy it seemed
Once found, which yet unfound most would have thought
Impossible: yet haply of thy race
In future days, if malice should abound,
Some one intent on mischief, or inspired
With devilish machination, might devise
Like instrument to plague the sons of men
For sin, on war and mutual slaughter bent.
Forthwith from council to the work they flew;

[1] *i. e.* the space below the surface of the ground.

[2] Great guns, the first invention whereof is very properly ascribed to the author of all evil. And Ariosto has described them in the same manner in his Orlando Furioso, cant. 9, st. 28, and attributes the invention to the devil.

None arguing stood; innumerable hands
Were ready; in a moment up they turned
Wide the celestial soil, and saw beneath
The originals of nature in their crude
Conception; sulphurous and nitrous foam [1]
They found, they mingled, and, with subtle art
Concocted and adjusted, they reduced
To blackest grain, and into store conveyed:
Part hidden veins digged up (nor hath this earth
Entrails unlike) of mineral and stone,
Whereof to found their engines and their balls
Of missive ruin; part incentive reed
Provide, pernicious[2] with one touch to fire.
So all ere day-spring, under conscious night,
Secret they finished, and in order set,
With silent circumspection, unespied.
"Now when fair morn orient in Heaven appeared,
Up rose the victor angels, and to arms
The matin trumpet sung: in arms they stood
Of golden panoply, refulgent host,
Soon banded; others from the dawning hills
Looked round, and scouts each coast light-armed scour,
Each quarter, to descry the distant foe,
Where lodged, or whither fled, or if for fight,
In motion or in halt: him soon they met
Under spread ensigns moving nigh, in slow
But firm battalion; back with speediest sail
Zophiel,[3] of cherubim the swiftest wing,
Came flying, and in mid air aloud thus cried:
"'Arm, warriors, arm for fight! the foe at hand,
Whom fled we thought, will save us long pursuit
This day; fear not his flight; so thick a cloud

[1] Bentley observes that only two materials are here mentioned, and these without charcoal can never make gunpowder. This is true; but is it necessary that a poet should be as exact as a writer about arts and sciences? If so, not only Milton but Spenser must be blamed, who has done the same thing as Milton has done; for in his Faërie Queen, b. i. c. vii. s. 13, describing a cannon charged with gunpowder, he says—

"With windy *nitre* and quick *sulphur* fraught,"

where it is observable that he takes no notice of charcoal, though gunpowder cannot be without it.—*Pearce.*

[2] *Pernix, i. e.* mischievously ready.

[3] *The spy of God.*

He comes, and settled in his face I see
Sad resolution and secure: let each
His adamantine coat gird well, and each
Fit well his helm, gripe fast his orbéd shield,
Borne even or high; for this day will pour down,
If I conjecture aught, no drizzling shower,
But rattling storm of arrows barbed with fire.'
" So warned he them, aware themselves, and soon
In order, quit of all impediment,
Instant without disturb they took alarm,
And onward moved embattled: when, behold,
Not distant far, with heavy pace, the foe
Approaching gross and huge, in hollow cube
Training his devilish enginery, impaled
On every side with shadowing squadrons deep,
To hide the fraud. At interview both stood
Awhile; but suddenly at head appeared
Satan, and thus was heard commanding loud:
" ' Vanguard, to right and left the front unfold;
That all may see who hate us, how we seek
Peace and composure, and with open breast
Stand ready to receive them, if they like
Our overture, and turn not back perverse;
But that I doubt; however, witness Heaven,
Heaven witness thou anon, while we *discharge*[1]
Freely our part; ye who appointed stand,
Do as you have in *charge*, and briefly *touch*
What we propound, and loud, that all may hear.'
" So scoffing, in ambiguous words, he scarce
Had ended, when to right and left the front
Divided, and to either flank retired:
Which to our eyes discovered, new and strange,
A triple mounted row of pillars laid
On wheels (for like to pillars most they seemed,
Or hollowed bodies made of oak or fir,
With branches lopped, in wood or mountain felled)
Brass, iron, stony mould,[2] had not their mouths
With hideous orifice gaped on us wide,
Portending hollow[3] truce: at each behind

[1] Some of the *puns* (if such they be) are as discreditable to Milton's taste as to poetry. I have ventured to italicise them, lest they should perish unperceived.
[2] Substance, mass.
[3] Another vile pun, scarcely sufficient to tempt an angel into so vile a habit.

A seraph stood, and in his hand a reed
Stood waving, tipped with fire: while we, suspense,
Collected stood within our thoughts amused,
Not long; for sudden all at once their reeds
Put forth, and to a narrow vent applied
With nicest touch. Immediate in a flame,
But soon obscured with smoke, all Heaven appeared.
From those deep-throated engines[1] belched, whose roar
Embowelled with outrageous noise the air,
And all her entrails tore, disgorging foul
Their devilish glut, chained thunderbolts and hail
Of iron globes; which, on the victor host
Levelled, with such impetuous fury smote,
That whom they hit, none on their feet might stand,
Though standing else as rocks, but down they fell
By thousands, angel on archangel rolled,
The sooner for their arms: unarmed they might
Have easily, as spirits, evaded swift
By quick contraction or remove; but now
Foul dissipation followed, and forced rout;
Nor served it to relax their serried[2] files.
What should they do? if on they rushed, repulse
Repeated, and indecent overthrow
Doubled, would render them yet more despised,
And to their foes a laughter; for in view
Stood ranked of seraphim another row,
In posture to displode their second tire
Of thunder: back defeated to return
They worse abhorred. Satan beheld their plight,
And to his mates thus in derision called:
"'O friends, why come not on these victors proud?
Erewhile they fierce were coming; and when we,
To entertain them fair with open front
And breast (what could we more?) propounded terms
Of composition, straight they changed their minds,
Flew off, and into strange vagaries fell,
As they would dance; yet for a dance they seemed
Somewhat extravagant and wild, perhaps
For joy of offered peace: but I suppose,

[1] So Shakespeare, in Othello, act iii.:—

"And oh, you mortal engines, whose rude throats
The immortal Jove's dread clamours counterfeit."

Newton.

[2] Close, compact, from the Italian *serrato*.

If our proposals once again were heard,
We should compel them to a quick result.'
"To whom thus Belial, in like gamesome mood:
'Leader, the terms we sent were terms of weight,
Of hard contents, and full of force urged home,
Such as we might perceive amused them all,
And stumbled many; who receives them right,
Had need from head to foot well understand;
Not understood, this gift they have besides,
They show us when our foes walk not upright.'
"So they among themselves, in pleasant vein,
Stood scoffing, heightened in their thoughts beyond
All doubt of victory; eternal might
To match with their inventions they presumed
So easy, and of his thunder made a scorn,
And all his host derided, while they stood
Awhile in trouble: but they stood not long;
Rage prompted them at length, and found them arms
Against such hellish mischief fit to oppose.
Forthwith (behold the excellence, the power,
Which God hath in his mighty angels placed)
Their arms away they threw, and to the hills
(For earth hath this variety from Heaven
Of pleasure situate in hill and dale)
Light as the lightning glimpse they ran, they flew,
From their foundations loosening to and fro
They plucked the seated hills with all their load,
Rocks, waters, woods, and by the shaggy tops
Uplifting bore them in their hands: amaze,
Be sure, and terror, seized the rebel host,
When coming towards them so dread they saw
The bottom of the mountains upward turned;
Till on those curséd engines' triple row
They saw them whelmed, and all their confidence
Under the weight of mountains buried deep;
Themselves invaded next, and on their heads
Main promontories flung, which in the air
Came shadowing, and oppressed whole legions armed;
Their armour helped their harm,[1] crushed in and bruised
Into their substance pent, which wrought them pain
Implacable, and many a dolorous groan,

[1] Newton compares Spenser, F. Q. i. 2 27—
"That erst him goodly armed, now most of all him harmed."

Long struggling underneath, ere they could wind
Out of such prison, though spirits of purest light,
Purest at first, now gross by sinning grown.
The rest in imitation to like arms.
Betook them, and the neigbouring hills uptore;
So hills amid the air encountered hills
Hurled to and fro with jaculation dire,
That under ground they fought in dismal shade;
Infernal noise! war seemed a civil game
To this uproar; horrid confusion heaped
Upon confusion rose: and now all Heaven
Had gone to wrack, with ruin overspread,
Had not the Almighty Father, where he sits
Shrined in his sanctuary of Heaven secure,
Consulting on the sum of things, foreseen
This tumult, and permitted all, advised:
That his great purpose he might so fulfil,
To honour his anointed Son avenged
Upon his enemies, and to declare
All power on him transferred: whence to his Son,
The assessor of his throne, he thus began:
"'Effulgence of my glory, Son beloved,
Son in whose face invisible is beheld
Visibly, what by deity I am,
And in whose hand what by decree I do,
Second Omnipotence! two days are past,
Two days, as we compute the days of Heaven,
Since Michael and his powers went forth to tame
These disobedient; sore hath been their fight,
As likeliest was, when two such foes met armed;
For to themselves I left them; and thou knowest
Equal in their creation they were formed,
Save what sin hath impaired, which yet hath wrought
Insensibly, for I suspend their doom;
Whence in perpetual fight they needs must last
Endless, and no solution will be found:
War wearied hath performed what war can do,
And to disordered rage let loose the reins,
With mountains as with weapons armed, which makes
Wild work in Heaven, and dangerous to the main
Two days are therefore past, the third is thine;
For thee I have ordained it, and thus far
Have suffered, that the glory may be thine
Of ending this great war, since none but thou

Can end it. Into thee such virtue and grace
Immense I have transfused, that all may know
In Heaven and Hell thy power above compare;
And, this perverse commotion governed thus,
To manifest thee worthiest to be Heir
Of all things, to be Heir and to be King
By sacred unction, thy deservéd right.
Go then, thou mightiest, in thy Father's might,
Ascend my chariot, guide the rapid wheels
That shake Heaven's basis, bring forth all my war,
My bow and thunder, my almighty arms
Gird on, and sword upon thy puissant thigh;
Pursue these sons of darkness, drive them out
From all Heaven's bounds into the utter deep;
There let them learn, as likes them, to despise
God and Messiah his anointed King.'
" He said, and on his Son with rays direct
Shone full; he all his Father full expressed
Ineffably into his face received;
And thus the filial Godhead answering spake:
" ' O Father, O Supreme of heavenly thrones,
First, highest, holiest, best! thou always seek'st
To glorify thy Son, I always thee,
As is most just; this I my glory account,
My exaltation, and my whole delight,
That thou in me, well pleased, declar'st thy will
Fulfilled, which to fulfil is all my bliss.
Sceptre and power, thy giving, I assume,
And gladlier shall resign, when in the end
Thou shalt be all in all, and I in thee
For ever, and in me all whom thou lov'st:
But whom thou hat'st, I hate, and can put on
Thy terrors, as I put thy mildness on,
Image of thee in all things, and shall soon,
Armed with thy might, rid Heaven of these rebelled,
To their prepared ill mansion driven down,
To chains of darkness, and the undying worm,
That from thy just obedience could revolt,
Whom to obey is happiness entire.
Then shall thy saints unmixed, and from the impure
Far separate, circling thy holy mount,
Unfeignéd hallelujahs to thee sing,
Hymns of high praise, and I among them chief.'
" So said, he, o'er his sceptre bowing, rose

From the right hand of glory where he sat;
And the third sacred morn began to shine, [sound
Dawning through Heaven: forth rushed with whirlwind
The chariot of paternal Deity,
Flashing thick flames, wheel within wheel undrawn,
Itself instinct with spirit, but convoyed
By four cherubic shapes; four faces each
Had wondrous; as with stars their bodies all
And wings were set with eyes, with eyes the wheels
Of beryl, and careering fires between;
Over their heads a crystal firmament,
Whereon a sapphire throne, inlaid with pure
Amber, and colours of the showery arch.[1]
He, in celestial panoply[2] all armed
Of radiant Urim, work divinely wrought,
Ascended; at his right hand victory
Sat eagle-winged; beside him hung his bow
And quiver with three-bolted thunder stored,
And from about him fierce effusion rolled
Of smoke, and bickering flame, and sparkles dire:
Attended with ten thousand thousand saints,[3]
He onward came; far off his coming shone;
And twenty thousand (I their number heard)
Chariots of God, half on each hand, were seen:
He on the wings of cherub rode sublime
On the crystalline sky, in sapphire throned,
Illustrious far and wide, but by his own
First seen; them unexpected joy surprised,
When the great ensign of Messiah blazed
Aloft by angels borne, his sign in Heaven,
Under whose conduct Michael soon reduced
His army, circumfused on either wing,
Under their Head embodied all in one.
Before him power divine his way prepared;
At his command the uprooted hills retired
Each to his place; they heard his voice, and went
Obsequious; Heaven his wonted face renewed,
And with fresh flowerets hill and valley smiled.
This saw his hapless foes, but stood obdured,
And to rebellious fight rallied their powers
Insensate, hope conceiving from despair.

[1] Cf. Ezek. i. 4; Js. lxvi. 15; Ezek. i., 5, 16, 19, 20; i. 6; x. 12 i. 16, 18; i. 22, 26, 27, 28.—*Newton.*

[2] Cf. Eph. vi. 11.

[3] Jude 14.

In heavenly spirits could such perverseness dwell?
But to convince the proud what signs avail,
Or wonders move the obdurate to relent?
They, hardened more by what might most reclaim,
Grieving to see his glory, at the sight
Took envy; and, aspiring to his height,
Stood re-embattled fierce, by force or fraud
Weening to prosper, and at length prevail
Against God and Messiah, or to fall
In universal ruin last; and now
To final battle drew, disdaining flight,
Or faint retreat; when the great Son of God
To all his host on either hand thus spake:

"'Stand still in bright array, ye saints; here stand
Ye angels armed; this day from battle rest.
Faithful hath been your warfare, and of God
Accepted, fearless in his righteous cause;
And as ye have received, so have ye done
Invincibly: but of this cursed crew
The punishment to other hand belongs;
Vengeance is his,[1] or whose he sole appoints.
Number to this day's work is not ordained,
Nor multitude; stand only and behold
God's indignation on these godless poured
By me; not you, but me, they have despised,
Yet envied; against me is all their rage,
Because the Father, to whom in Heaven supreme
Kingdom, and power, and glory, appertains,
Hath honoured me according to his will.
Therefore to me their doom he hath assigned,
That they may have their wish, to try with me
In battle which the stronger proves, they all,
Or I alone against them, since by strength
They measure all, of other excellence
Not emulous, nor care who them excels;
Nor other strife with them do I vouchsafe.'

"So spake the Son, and into terror changed
His countenance too severe to be beheld,
And full of wrath bent on his enemies.
At once the four spread out their starry wings
With dreadful shade contiguous, and the orbs
Of his fierce chariot rolled, as with the sound
Of torrent floods, or of a numerous host.

[1] Deut. xxxii. 35; Rom. xii. 9.

He on his impious foes right onward drove,
Gloomy as night;[1] under his burning wheels
The stedfast empyréan shook throughout,
All but the throne itself of God. Full soon
Among them he arrived, in his right hand
Grasping ten thousand thunders, which he sent
Before him, such as in their souls infixed
Plagues; they, astonished, all resistance lost,
All courage; down their idle weapons dropped;
O'er shields, and helms, and helméd heads, he rode
Of thrones and mighty seraphim prostráte,
That wished the mountains[2] now might be again
Thrown on them as a shelter from his ire.
Nor less on either side tempestuous fell
His arrows, from the fourfold-visaged four
Distinct with eyes, and from the living wheels
Distinct alike with multitude of eyes;
One spirit in them ruled, and every eye
Glared lightning, and shot forth pernicious fire
Among the accursed, that withered all their strength,
And of their wonted vigour left them drained,
Exhausted, spiritless, afflicted, fallen.
Yet half his strength he put not forth, but checked
His thunder in mid volley; for he meant
Not to destroy, but root them out of Heaven:
The overthrown he raised, and, as a herd
Of goats or timorous flock together thronged,
Drove them before him thunderstruck, pursued
With terrors and with furies to the bounds
And crystal wall of Heaven; which, opening wide,
Rolled inward, and a spacious gap disclosed
Into the wasteful deep; the monstrous sight
Struck them with horror backward, but far worse
Urged them behind; headlong themselves they threw
Down from the verge of Heaven; eternal wrath
Burnt after them to the bottomless pit.
"Hell heard the unsufferable noise; Hell saw
Heaven ruining[3] from Heaven, and would have fled
Affrighted; but strict fate had cast too deep
Her dark foundations, and too fast had bound.

[1] Homer, Il. i. —

"Breathing revenge, a sudden night he spread,
And gloomy darkness rolled about his head."—*Pope.*

[2] Rev. vi. 16. [3] *i. e.* rushing, falling down into destruction.

Nine days they fell; confounded Chaos roared,
And felt tenfold confusion in their fall
Through his wild anarchy, so huge a rout
Encumbered him with ruin: Hell at last
Yawning received them whole, and on them closed
Hell, their fit habitation, fraught with fire
Unquenchable, the house of woe and pain.
Disburdened Heaven rejoiced,[1] and soon repaired
Her mural breach, returning whence it rolled.
Sole victor, from the expulsion of his foes,
Messiah his triumphal chariot turned:
To meet him all his saints, who silent stood
Eye-witnesses of his almighty acts,
With jubilee advanced; and as they went,
Shaded with branching palm, each order bright
Sung triumph, and him sung victorious King,
Son, Heir, and Lord, to him dominion given,
Worthiest to reign: he celebrated rode
Triumphant through mid Heaven, into the courts
And temple of his mighty Father throned
On high; who into glory him received,
Where now he sits at the right hand of bliss.
"Thus measuring things in Heaven by things on earth,
At thy request, and that thou mayst beware
By what is past, to thee I have revealed
What might have else to human race been hid;
The discord which befell, and war in Heaven
Among the angelic powers, and the deep fall
Of those too high aspiring, who rebelled
With Satan; he who envies now thy state,
Who now is plotting how he may seduce
Thee also from obedience, that with him
Bereaved of happiness thou mayst partake
His punishment, eternal misery;
Which would be all his solace and revenge,
As a despite done against the most High,
Thee once to gain companion of his woe.
But listen not to his temptations; warn
Thy weaker; let it profit thee to have heard
By terrible example the reward
Of disobedience; firm they might have stood,
Yet fell; remember, and fear to transgress."

[1] So Tasso, Gier. Lib. cant. 9, st. 66:—
"The earth, delivered from so foul annoy
Recalled her beauty, and resumed her joy." *Fairfax.—Thyer.*

BOOK VII.

THE ARGUMENT.

Raphael, at the request of Adam, relates how and wherefore this world was first created; that God, after the expelling of Satan and his angels out of Heaven, declared his pleasure to create another world, and other creatures to dwell therein; sends his Son with glory and attendance of angels to perform the work of creation in six days; the angels celebrate with hymns the performance thereof, and his reascension into Heaven.

DESCEND from Heaven, Urania, by that name
If rightly thou art called, whose voice divine
Following, above the Olympian hill I soar,
Above the flight of Pegaséan wing.
The meaning, not the name, I call; for thou
Nor of the Muses nine, nor on the top
Of old Olympus dwell'st; but, heavenly born,
Before the hills[1] appeared, or fountain flowed,
Thou[2] with eternal Wisdom didst converse,
Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play
In presence of the almighty Father, pleased
With thy celestial song. Up led by thee
Into the Heaven of Heavens I have presumed,
An earthly guest, and drawn empyreal air,
Thy tempering: with like safety guided down,
Return me to my native element;
Lest from this flying steed unreined (as once
Bellerophon, though from a lower clime)
Dismounted, on the Aleian field I fall,[3]

[1] Prov. viii. 24-30. [2] Bentley proposes "thee."

[3] Bellerophon was a beautiful and valiant youth, son of Glaucus, who, refusing the amorous applications of Antea, wife of Prætus, king of Argos, was by her false suggestions, like those of Joseph's

Erroneous there to wander, and forlorn.
Half yet remains unsung, but narrower bound
Within the visible diurnal sphere;
Standing on earth, not rapt above the pole,
More safe I sing with mortal voice, unchanged
To hoarse or mute, though fallen on evil days,
On evil days though fallen, and evil tongues;
In darkness, and with dangers compassed round,
And solitude; yet not alone, while thou
Visit'st my slumbers nightly, or when morn
Purples the east: still govern thou my song,
Urania, and fit audience find, though few.
But drive far off the barbarous dissonance
Of Bacchus and his revellers, the race
Of that wild rout that tore the Thracian bard
In Rhodope, where woods and rocks had ears
To rapture, till the savage clamour drowned
Both harp and voice; nor could the Muse defend
Her son. So fail not thou, who thee implores:
For thou art heavenly, she an empty dream.
Say, goddess, what ensued when Raphaël,
The affable archangel, had forewarned
Adam by dire example to beware
Apostacy, by what befell in Heaven
To those apostates, lest the like befall
In Paradise to Adam or his race,
Charged not to touch the interdicted tree,
If they transgress, and slight that sole command,
So easily obeyed amid the choice
Of all tastes else to please their appetite,
Though wandering. He, with his consorted Eve,
The story heard attentive, and was filled
With admiration and deep muse, to hear
Of things so high and strange, things to their thought
So unimaginable as hate in Heaven,
And war so near the peace of God in bliss,
With such confusion; but the evil, soon
Driven back, redounded as a flood on those

mistress to her husband, sent into Lycia with letters desiring his destruction, where he was put on several enterprises full of hazard, in which, however, he came off conqueror; but, attempting vain-gloriously to mount up to Heaven on the winged horse Pegasus, he fell and wandered in the Aleian plains till he died.—*Hume and Richardson.*

From whom it sprung, impossible to mix
With blessedness. Whence Adam soon repealed
The doubts that in his heart arose: and now
Led on, yet sinless, with desire to know
What nearer might concern him; how this world
Of Heaven and earth conspicuous first began;
When, and whereof created; for what cause;
What within Eden, or without, was done
Before his memory; as one whose drouth[1]
Yet scarce allayed, still eyes the current stream,
Whose liquid murmur heard, new thirst excites,
Proceeded thus to ask his heavenly guest:
"Great things, and full of wonder in our ears,
Far differing from this world, thou hast revealed,
Divine interpreter, by favour sent
Down from the empyréan to forewarn
Us timely of what might else have been our loss,
Unknown, which human knowledge could not reach:
For which to the infinitely Good we owe
Immortal thanks, and his admonishment
Receive with solemn purpose to observe
Immutably his sovereign will, the end
Of what we are. But since thou hast vouchsafed
Gently for our instruction to impart
Things above earthly thought, which yet concerned
Our knowing, as to highest wisdom seemed,
Deign to descend now lower, and relate
What may no less, perhaps, avail us known,
How first began this Heaven which we behold
Distant so high, with moving fires adorned
Innumerable, and this which yields or fills
All space, the ambient air wide interfused,
Embracing round this florid earth; what cause
Moved the Creator, in his holy rest
Through all eternity, so late to build
In Chaos; and, the work begun, how soon
Absolved; if unforbid thou mayst unfold
What we, not to explore the secrets ask
Of his eternal empire, but the more
To magnify his works, the more we know.
And the great light of day yet wants to run
Much of his race though steep; suspense in Heaven,
Held by thy voice, thy potent voice, he hears,

[1] Thirst.

And longer will delay to hear thee tell
His generation, and the rising birth
Of nature from the unapparent deep:
Or if the star of evening and the moon
Haste to thy audience, night with her will bring
Silence, and sleep listening to thee will watch,
Or we can bid his absence, till thy song
End, and dismiss thee ere the morning shine."
Thus Adam his illustrious guest besought;
And thus the godlike angel answered mild:
"This also thy request, with caution asked,
Obtain: though to recount almighty works
What words or tongue of seraph can suffice,
Or heart of man suffice to comprehend?
Yet what thou canst attain, which best may serve
To glorify the Maker, and infer
Thee also happier, shall not be withheld
Thy hearing: such commission from above
I have received, to answer thy desire
Of knowledge within bounds; beyond, abstain
To ask, nor let thine own inventions[1] hope
Things not revealed, which the invisible King,
Only omniscient, hath suppressed in night,
To none communicable in earth or Heaven:
Enough is left besides to search and know.
But knowledge is as food, and needs no less
Her temperance over appetite, to know
In measure what the mind may well contain,
Oppresses else with surfeit, and soon turns
Wisdom to folly, as nourishment to wind.
"Know, then, that after Lucifer from Heaven
(So call him, brighter once amidst the host
Of angels, than that star the stars among)
Fell with his flaming legions through the deep
Into his place,[2] and the great Son returned
Victorious with his saints, the omnipotent
Eternal Father from his throne beheld
Their multitude, and to his Son thus spake:
"'At least[1] our envious foe hath failed, who thought

[1] This word is here used to denote that unlawful curiosity by which men seek to know more than is given to them. Newton compares this scriptural use of the term in Psalm cvi. 29, 38.
[2] As Judas is said to go "to his own place," Acts i. 25.
[3] "At last" is proposed by Thyer.

All like himself rebellious, by whose aid
This inaccessible high strength, the seat
Of Deity supreme, us dispossessed,
He trusted to have seized, and into fraud
Drew many, whom their place knows here no more;[1]
Yet far the greater part have kept, I see,
Their station; Heaven yet populous retains
Number sufficient to possess her realms
Though wide, and this high temple to frequent
With ministeries due and solemn rites:
But lest his heart exalt him in the harm
Already done, to have dispeopled Heaven,
My damage fondly deemed, I can repair
That detriment, if such it be to lose
Self-lost, and in a moment will create
Another world, out of one man a race
Of men innumerable, there to dwell,
Not here, till by degrees of merit raised
They open to themselves at length the way
Up hither, under long obedience tried,
And earth be changed to Heaven, and Heaven to earth,[2]
One kingdom, joy and union without end.
Meanwhile inhabit lax,[3] ye powers of Heaven;
And thou my Word, begotten Son, by thee
This I perform; speak thou, and be it done:
My overshadowing Spirit and might with thee
I send along; ride forth, and bid the deep
Within appointed bounds be Heaven and earth,
Boundless the deep,[4] because I am who fill
Infinitude, nor vacuous the space.
Though I, uncircumscribed myself, retire,
And put not forth my goodness, which is free
To act or not, necessity and chance
Approach not me, and what I will is fate.'

[1] A scripture phrase.—See Job vii. 10, Ps. ciii. 16.

[2] Milton's meaning seems to have been this: that earth would be so happy in being inhabited by *obedient* creatures, that it would be changed to, *i. e.* resemble, Heaven; and Heaven, by receiving those creatures, would in this resemble earth, that it would be stocked with men for its inhabitants.—*Pearce.*

[3] Dwell more at large.

[4] "Boundless the deep," &c. The sense is, the deep is boundless; but the space contained in it is not vacuous and empty, because there is an infinitude, and I fill it. Though I, who am myself uncircumscribed, set bounds to my goodness, and do not exert it everywhere, yet neither necessity nor chance influence my actions, &c.—*Pearce.*

"So spake the Almighty, and to what he spake
His Word, the filial Godhead, gave effect.
Immediate are the acts of God, more swift
Than time or motion, but to human ears
Cannot without process of speech be told,
So told as earthly notion can receive.
Great triumph and rejoicing was in Heaven,
When such was heard declared the Almighty's will;
Glory they sung to the most High, good will
To future men, and in their dwellings peace;
Glory to him, whose just avenging ire
Had driven out the ungodly from his sight,
And the habitations of the just; to him
Glory and praise, whose wisdom had ordained
Good out of evil to create, instead
Of spirits malign a better race to bring
Into their vacant room, and thence diffuse
His good to worlds and ages infinite.
"So sang the hierarchies: meanwhile the Son
On his great expedition now appeared,
Girt with omnipotence, with radiance crowned
Of majesty divine; sapience and love
Immense, and all his Father in him shone
About his chariot numberless were poured
Cherub and seraph, potentates and thrones,
And virtues, winged spirits, and chariots winged
From the armoury of God, where stand of old
Myriads between two brazen mountains lodged
Against a solemn day, harnessed at hand,
Celestial equipage; and now came forth
Spontaneous, for within them spirit lived,
Attendant on their Lord; Heaven opened wide
Her ever-during gates, harmonious sound
On golden hinges moving, to let forth
The King of Glory, in his powerful Word
And Spirit, coming to create new worlds.
On heavenly ground they stood, and from the shore
They viewed the vast immeasurable abyss
Outrageous as a sea, dark, wasteful, wild,
Up from the bottom turned by furious winds
And surging waves, as mountains, to assault
Heaven's height, and with the centre mix the pole.
"'Silence, ye troubled waves! and thou deep, peace!'
Said then the omnific Word: 'your discord end!'.

Nor stayed, but, on the wings of cherubim
Uplifted, in paternal glory rode
Far into Chaos, and the world unborn;
For Chaos heard his voice: him all his train
Followed in bright procession, to behold
Creation, and the wonders of his might.
Then stayed the fervid wheels, and in his hand
He took the golden compasses,[1] prepared
In God's eternal store, to circumscribe
This universe, and all created *things*:
One foot he centred, and the other turned
Round through the vast profundity obscure,
And said: 'Thus far extend, thus far thy bounds,
This be thy just circumference, O world.'
Thus God the Heaven created, thus the earth,
Matter unformed and void: darkness profound
Covered the abyss: but on the watery calm
His brooding wings the Spirit of God outspread,
And vital virtue infused, and vital warmth
Throughout the fluid mass, but downward purged
The black tartareous cold infernal dregs,
Adverse to life: then founded, then conglobed
Like things to like, the rest to several place
Disparted, and between spun out the air,
And earth self-balanced on her centre hung.
"'Let there be light!' said God, and forthwith light
Ethereal, first of things, quintessence pure,
Sprung from the deep, and from her native east
To journey through the airy gloom began,
Sphered in a radiant cloud, for yet the sun
Was not; she in a cloudy tabernacle
Sojourned the while. God saw the light was good;
And light from darkness by the hemisphere
Divided: light the day, and darkness night
He named. Thus was the first day even and morn:
Nor passed uncelebrated, nor unsung
By the celestial quires, when orient light
Exhaling first from darkness they beheld;
Birth-day of Heaven and earth; with joy and shout
The hollow universal orb they filled,
And touched their golden harps, and hymning praised

[1] Prov. viii. 27: "When he prepared the heavens, I was there; when he set a compass upon the face of the deep."

God and his works; Creator him they sung,
Both when first evening was, and when first morn.
" Again, God said, 'Let there be firmament[1]
Amid the waters, and let it divide
The waters from the waters!' and God made
The firmament, expanse of liquid, pure,
Transparent, elemental air, diffused
In circuit to the uttermost convex
Of this great round; partition firm and sure,
The waters underneath from those above
Dividing: for as earth, so he the world
Built on circumfluous waters calm, in wide
Crystalline ocean; and the loud misrule
Of Chaos far removed, lest fierce extremes
Contiguous might distemper the whole frame:
And Heaven he named the firmament: so even
And morning chorus sung the second day.
" The earth was formed, but in the womb as yet
Of waters, embryon immature involved,
Appeared not: over all the face of earth
Main ocean flowed, not idle, but, with warm
Prolific humour softening all her globe,
Fermented the great mother to conceive,
Satiate with genial moisture, when God said,
'Be gathered now, ye waters under Heaven,
Into one place, and let dry land appear!'
Immediately the mountains huge appear
Emergent, and their broad bare backs upheave
Into the clouds; their tops ascend the sky:
So high as heaved the tumid hills, so low
Down sunk a hollow bottom broad and deep,
Capacious bed of waters: thither they
Hasted with glad precipitance, uprolled

[1] They who understand the "firmament" to be the vast air, expanded and stretched out on all sides to the starry heavens, esteem the waters above it to be those generated, in the middle region of the air, of vapours exhaled and drawn up thither from the steaming earth and nether waters, which descend again in such vast showers and mighty floods of rain, that not only rivers but seas may be imaginable above, as appeared when the "cataracts" came down in a deluge, "and the flood-gates of Heaven were opened," Gen. vii. 2. Others, and those many, by these "waters above," understand the crystalline heaven (by Gassendus made double), by our author better named "crystalline ocean," by its clearness resembling water: "who layeth the beams of his chambers in the water," Psalm civ. 3.

As drops on dust conglobing from the dry;
Part rise in crystal wall, or ridge direct,
For haste; such flight the great command impressed
On the swift floods; as armies at the call
Of trumpet (for of armies thou hast heard)
Troop to their standard, so the watery throng,
Wave rolling after wave, where way they found,
If steep, with torrent rapture; if through plain,
Soft ebbing; nor withstood them rock or hill,
But they, or under ground, or circuit wide
With serpent error wandering, found their way,
And on the washy ooze deep channels wore;
Easy, ere God had bid the ground be dry,
All but within those banks, where rivers now
Stream, and perpetual draw their humid train.
The dry land, earth, and the great receptacle
Of congregated waters he called seas:
And saw that it was good, and said, 'Let the earth
Put forth the verdant grass, herb yielding seed,
And fruit-tree yielding fruit after her kind,
Whose seed is in herself upon the earth!'
He scarce had said, when the bare earth, till then
Desert and bare, unsightly, unadorned,
Brought forth the tender grass, whose verdure clad
Her universal face with pleasant green;
Then herbs of every leaf, that sudden flowered
Opening their various colours, and made gay
Her bosom, smelling sweet: and, these scarce blown,
Forth flourished thick the clustering vine, forth crept
The smelling[1] gourd, up stood the corny reed[2]
Embattled in her field; and the humble shrub,
And bush with frizzled hair implicit,[3] last
Rose as in dance the stately trees, and spread
Their branches hung with copious fruit, or gemmed[4]
Their blossoms; with high woods the hills were crowned,

[1] We must obviously read "swelling," with Bentley.

[2] The horny reeds stood upright among the undergrowths of nature, like a grove of spears, or a battalion with its pikes aloft. *Corneus* (Latin), of or like horn. Virg. Æn. iii. 22

[3] "Hair," *coma* in Latin, is used for leaves, twigs, and branches; and "implicit" signifies entangled. The subject is low, and therefore he is forced to raise the expression.

[4] Put forth their blossoms, of *gemmare* (Latin), to bud forth.—*Hume.*

With tufts the valleys and each fountain side,
With borders long the rivers; that earth now
Seemed like to Heaven, a seat where gods might dwell,
Or wander with delight, and love to haunt
Her sacred shades: though God had yet not rained[1]
Upon the earth, and man to till the ground
None was, but from the earth a dewy mist
Went up and watered all the ground, and each
Plant of the field, which, ere it was in the earth
God made, and every herb, before it grew
On the green stem; God saw that it was good:
So even and morn recorded[2] the third day.
"Again the Almighty spake: 'Let there be lights
High in the expanse of Heaven, to divide
The day from night; and let them be for signs,
For seasons, and for days, and circling years;
And let them be for lights, as I ordain
Their office in the firmament of Heaven
To give light on the earth!' and it was so.
And God made two great lights, great for their use
To man, the greater to have rule by day,
The less by night altern; and made the stars,
And set them in the firmament of Heaven
To illuminate the earth, and rule the day
In their vicissitude, and rule the night,
And light from darkness to divide. God saw,
Surveying his great work, that it was good:
For of celestial bodies first the sun
A mighty sphere he framed, unlightsome first,
Though of ethereal mould: then formed the moon
Globose, and every magnitude of stars,
And sowed with stars the Heaven thick as a field:
Of light by far the greater part he took,
Transplanted from her cloudy shrine, and placed
In the sun's orb, made porous[3] to receive

[1] This idea is woven in from Gen. ii. 4-6.

[2] Celebrated, caused to be remembered. This was done by the "even and morning chorus" (ver. 275), with "evening harps and matin" (ver. 450). What is done by the voices and instruments is poetically ascribed to the time in which they were employed.—*Richardson.*

[3] Porous, yet firm. Milton seems to have taken this thought from what is said of the Bologna stone, which, being placed in the light, will imbibe and for some time retain it so as to enlighten a dark place.—*Richardson.*

And drink the liquid light, firm to retain
Her gathered beams, great palace now of light.
Hither, as to their fountain, other stars
Repairing, in their golden urns draw light,
And hence the morning planet gilds her horns;
By tincture or reflection they augment
Their small peculiar, though from human sight
So far remote, with diminution seen.
First in his east the glorious lamp was seen,
Regent of day, and all the horizon round
Invested with bright rays, jocund to run
His longitude through Heaven's high road; the gray
Dawn and the Pleiades before him danced,[1]
Shedding sweet influence: less bright the moon,
But opposite in levelled west was set,
His mirror, with full face borrowing her light
From him, for other light she needed none
In that aspect, and still that distance keeps
Till night, then in the east her turn she shines,
Revolved on Heaven's great axle, and her reign
With thousand lesser lights dividual holds,
With thousand thousand stars, that then appeared
Spangling the hemisphere: then first adorned
With their bright luminaries that set and rose,
Glad evening and glad morn crowned the fourth day.
"And God said: 'Let the waters generate
Reptile[2] with spawn abundant, living soul:
And let fowl fly above the earth, with wings
Displayed on the open firmament of Heaven!'
And God created the great whales, and each

[1] These are beautiful images, and very much resemble the famous picture of "The Morning," by Guido, where the sun is represented in his chariot, with the Aurora flying before him shedding flowers, and seven beautiful nymph-like figures dancing before and about his chariot, which are commonly taken for the hours, but possibly may be the Pleiades, as they are seven in number, and it is not easy to assign a reason why the hours should be signified by that number particularly. The Pleiades are seven stars in the neck of the constellation Taurus, which, rising about the time of the vernal equinox, are called by the Latins *Vergiliæ*.—*Newton.*

[2] But by "reptile" or "creeping thing" here, Milton means all such creatures as move in the waters (see Le Clerc's note on Gen. i. 20); and by "creeping thing," mentioned in the sixth day's creation, he means "creeping things of the earth;" for so, both in Milton's account, ver. 452, and in Gen. i. 24, the words "of the earth" are to be joined in construction to "creeping thing."—*Pearce.*

Soul living, each that crept, which plenteously
The waters generated by their kinds,
And every bird of wing after his kind;
And saw that it was good, and bless'd them, saying:
'Be fruitful, multiply, and in the seas
And lakes, and running streams, the waters fill;
And let the fowl be multiplied on the earth!'
Forthwith the sounds and seas, each creek and bay,
With fry innumerable swarm, and shoals
Of fish that with their fins and shining scales
Glide under the green wave, in sculls[1] that oft
Bank the mid sea; part single, or with mate,
Graze the sea-weed their pasture, and through groves
Of coral stray, or sporting with quick glance
Show to the sun their waved coats dropt with gold,
Or, in their pearly shells at ease, attend
Moist nutriment, or under rocks their food
In jointed armour watch; on smooth the seal
And bended dolphins play: part huge of bulk
Wallowing unwieldy, enormous in their gait,
Tempest the ocean; there leviathan,[2]
Hugest of living creatures, on the deep
Stretched like a promontory, sleeps or swims,
And seems a moving land, and at his gills
Draws in, and at his trunk spouts out, a sea.
Meanwhile the tepid caves, and fens, and shores,
Their brood as numerous hatch, from the egg that soon
Bursting with kindly rupture forth disclosed
Their callow young; but feathered soon and fledge,
They summed their pens,[3] and, soaring the air sublime,
With clang despised the ground, under a cloud
In prospect; there the eagle and the stork
On cliffs and cedar tops their eyries[4] build:
Part loosely wing the region, part more wise

[1] Multitudes, from the Saxon *sceole*, an assembly. But Newton would prefer reading "*and* sculls," I think rightly.

[2] See i. 200.

[3] "Pens," from *penna*, a feather. "Summed" is a term in falconry: a hawk is said to be "full summed," when his feathers are grown to their full strength. So Par. Reg. i. 14:—

"With prosperous wing full summed." *Richardson.*

[4] Nests.—Cf. Job xxxix. 27, sq.

In common, ranged in figure, wedge[1] their way,
Intelligent of seasons, and set forth
Their airy caravan, high over seas
Flying, and over lands, with mutual wing
Easing their flight; so steers the prudent crane
Her annual voyage, borne on winds; the air
Floats, as they pass, fanned with unnumbered plumes:
From branch to branch the smaller birds with song
Solaced the woods, and spread their painted wings
Till even, nor then the solemn nightingale
Ceased warbling, but all night tuned her soft lays;
Others on silver lakes and rivers bathed
Their downy breast; the swan with arched neck
Between her[2] white wings mantling proudly, rows
Her state with oary feet; yet oft they quit
The dank, and, rising on stiff pennons, tower
The mid aërial sky: others on ground
Walked firm; the crested cock, whose clarion sounds
The silent hours, and the other whose gay train
Adorns him, coloured with the florid hue
Of rainbows and starry eyes. The waters thus
With fish replenished, and the air with fowl,
Evening and morn solemnized the fifth day.
"The sixth, and of creation last, arose
With evening harps and matin, when God said:
'Let the earth bring forth soul living in her kind,

[1] This is well illustrated by a passage quoted by Newton from the "Spectacle de la Nature," which says upon this occasion, Dial. xi.—"As to wild ducks and cranes, both the one and the other, at the approach of winter, fly in quest of more favourable climates. They all assemble at a certain day, like swallows and quails. They decamp at the same time, and it is very agreeable to observe their flight. They generally range themselves in a long column, like an I, or in two lines united in a point, like 'a V reversed.'" And so, as Milton says,—

"ranged in figure, 'wedge their way.'"

"The duck or quail who forms the point, cuts the air, and facilitates a passage to those who follow; but he is charged with this commission only for a certain time, at the conclusion of which he wheels into the rear, and another takes his post." And thus, as Milton says,—

"with mutual wing
Easing their flight."

[2] Poets generally make the swan masculine. Milton probably took a contrary course to avoid the disagreeable sound of "his state," in v. 440.

Cattle. and creeping things, and beast of the earth,
Each in their kind!' The earth obeyed, and straight
Opening her fertile womb, teemed at a birth
Innumerous living creatures, perfect forms,
Limbed and full grown: out of the ground up rose,
As from his lair, the wild beast. where he wons[1]
In forest wild, in thicket, brake, or den;
Among the trees in pairs they rose. they walked
The cattle in the fields and meadows green:
Those rare and solitary, these in flocks
Pasturing at once, and in broad herds upsprung.
The grassy clods now calved,[2] now half appeared
The tawny lion, pawing to get free
His hinder parts, then springs as broke from bonds,
And rampant shakes his brinded mane; the ounce,
The libbard,[3] and the tiger, as the mole
Rising, the crumbled earth above them threw
In hillocks: the swift stag from underground
Bore up his branching head: scarce from his mould
Behemoth, biggest born of earth, upheaved
His vastness: fleeced the flocks and bleating rose,
As plants: ambiguous between sea and land
The river-horse and scaly crocodile.
At once came forth whatever creeps the ground,
Insect or worm: those waved their limber fans
For wings, and smallest lineaments exact
In all the liveries decked of summer's pride
With spots of gold and purple, azure and green;
These as a line their long dimension drew,
Streaking the ground with sinuous trace; not all
Minims of nature: some of serpent kind,
Wondrous in length and corpulence, involved
Their snaky folds, and added wings. First crept
The parsimonious emmet, provident
Of future, in small room large heart enclosed;
Pattern of just equality perhaps
Hereafter, joined in her popular tribes
Of commonalty: swarming next appeared
The female bee, that feeds her husband drone

[1] Saxon for "inhabits, dwells."

[2] To "calve" (from the Belgic word *kalven*) signifies to bring forth: it is a general word, and does not relate to cows only; for hinds are said to "calve" in Job xxxix. 1, and Psalm xxix. 9.—*Newton.*

[3] Leopard.

Deliciously, and builds her waxen cells
With honey stored: the rest are numberless,
And thou their natures know'st, and gav'st them names,
Needless to thee repeated; nor unknown
The serpent, subtlest beast of all the field,
Of huge extent sometimes, with brazen eyes
And hairy mane terrific, though to thee
Not noxious, but obedient at thy call.
"Now Heaven in all her glory shone, and rolled
Her motions, as the great first Mover's hand
First wheeled their course; earth in her rich attire
Consummate lovely smiled; air, water, earth,
By fowl, fish, beast, was flown, was swum, was walked
Frequent; and of the sixth day yet remained:
There wanted yet the master-work, the end
Of all yet done; a creature who, not prone
And brute as other creatures, but endued
With sanctity of reason, might erect
His stature, and upright with front serene
Govern the rest, self-knowing; and from thence
Magnanimous to correspond with Heaven,
But grateful to acknowledge whence his good
Descends; thither with heart, and voice, and eyes
Directed in devotion, to adore
And worship God supreme, who made him chief
Of all his works; therefore the Omnipotent
Eternal Father (for where is not he
Present?) thus to his Son audibly spake:
"'Let us make now man in our image, man
In our similitude, and let them rule
Over the fish and fowl of sea and air,
Beast of the field, and over all the earth,
And every creeping thing that creeps the ground
This said, he formed thee, Adam; thee, O man,
Dust of the ground, and in thy nostrils breathed
The breath of life; in his own image he
Created thee, in the image of God
Express, and thou becam'st a living soul.
Male he created thee, but thy consort
Female, for race; then bless'd mankind, and said:
'Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth;
Subdue it, and throughout dominion hold
Over fish of the sea, and fowl of the air,
And every living thing that moves on the earth'

Wherever thus created, for no place
Is yet distinct by name, thence, as thou know'st,
He brought thee into this delicious grove,
This garden, planted with the trees of God
Delectable both to behold and taste;
And freely all their pleasant fruit for food
Gave thee; all sorts are here that all the earth yields,
Variety without end; but of the tree
Which, tasted, works knowledge of good and evil,
Thou mayst not; in the day thou eat'st, thou diest:
Death is the penalty imposed: beware,
And govern well thy appetite; lest Sin
Surprise thee, and her black attendant Death.
"Here finished he, and all that he had made
Viewed, and behold all was entirely good;
So even and morn accomplished the sixth day:
Yet not till the Creator, from his work
Desisting, though unwearied, up returned,
Up to the Heaven of Heavens, his high abode,
Thence to behold this new-created world,
The addition of his empire, how it showed
In prospect from his throne, how good, how fair,
Answering his great idea. Up he rode,
Followed with acclamation, and the sound
Symphonious of ten thousand harps that tuned
Angelic harmonies: the earth, the air,
Resounded (thou rememberest, for thou heard'st)
The Heavens and all the constellations rung,
The planets in their station[1] listening stood
While the bright pomp ascended jubilant.
'Open, ye everlasting gates!' they sung;
'Open, ye Heavens, your living doors; let in
The great Creator from his work returned
Magnificent, his six days' work, a world;
Open, and henceforth oft; for God will deign
To visit oft the dwellings of just men
Delighted, and with frequent intercourse
Thither will send his winged messengers
On errands of supernal grace.' So sung
The glorious train ascending: He through Heaven,

[1] The "station" of a planet is a term used in art, when the planet appears neither to go backwards nor forwards, but to stand still and keep the same place in its orbit.—*Newton.*

That opened wide her blazing portals, led
To God's eternal house direct the way;
A broad and ample road, whose dust is gold,
And pavement stars, as stars to thee appear,
Seen in the galaxy, that milky way,
Which nightly as a circling zone thou seest
Powdered with stars. And now on earth the seventh
Evening arose in Eden, for the sun
Was set, and twilight from the east came on,
Forerunning night; when at the holy mount
Of Heaven's high-seated top, the imperial throne
Of Godhead, fixed for ever firm and sure,
The Filial Power arrived, and sat him down
With his great Father; for he also went
Invisible, yet stayed (such privilege
Hath Omnipresence), and the work ordained,
Author and end of all things, and from work
Now resting, blessed and hallowed the seventh day,
As resting on that day from all his work,
But not in silence holy kept; the harp
Had work, and rested not; the solemn pipe,
And dulcimer, all organs of sweet stop,
All sounds on fret by string or golden wire,
Tempered soft tunings, intermixed with voice
Choral or unison; of incense clouds,
Fuming from golden censers, hid the mount.
Creation and the six days' acts they sung:
'Great are thy works, Jehovah! infinite
Thy power! what thought can measure thee, or tongue
Relate thee? Greater now in thy return
Than from the giant angels: thee that day
Thy thunders magnified; but to create
Is greater than created to destroy.
Who can impair thee, mighty King, or bound
Thy empire? Easily the proud attempt
Of spirits apostate and their counsels vain
Thou hast repelled, while impiously they thought
Thee to diminish, and from thee withdraw
The number of thy worshippers. Who seeks
To lessen thee, against his purpose serves
To manifest the more thy might: his evil
Thou usest, and from thence creat'st more good.
Witness this new-made world, another Heaven
From Heaven-gate not far, founded in view

On the clear hyaline,[1] the glassy sea;
Of amplitude almost immense, with stars
Numerous, and every star perhaps a world
Of destined habitation; but thou know'st
Their seasons: among these the seat of men,
Earth, with her nether ocean circumfused,
Their pleasant dwelling-place. Thrice happy men,
And sons of men, whom God hath thus advanced,
Created in his image, there to dwell
And worship him, and in reward to rule
Over his works, on earth, in sea, or air,
And multiply a race of worshippers
Holy and just: thrice happy if they know
Their happiness, and persevere upright!'

"So sung they, and the empyrean rung
With hallelujahs: thus was sabbath kept.
And thy request think now fulfilled, that asked
How first this world and face of things began,
And what before thy memory was done
From the beginning, that posterity
Informed by thee might know: if else thou seek'st
Aught, not surpassing human measure, say

[1] Glassy substance.

END OF THE SEVENTH BOOK

BOOK VIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

Adam inquires concerning celestial motions, is doubtfully answered, and exhorted to search rather things more worthy of knowledge. Adam assents, and, still desirous to detain Raphael, relates to him what he remembered since his own creation, his placing in Paradise, his talk with God concerning solitude and fit society, his first meeting and nuptials with Eve, his discourse with the angel thereupon, who, after admonitions repeated, departs.

THE angel ended, and in Adam's ear
So charming left his voice, that he a while
Thought him still speaking, still stood[1] fixed to hear;
Then, as new waked, thus gratefully replied:
"What thanks sufficient, or what recompense
Equal have I to render thee, divine
Historian, who thus largely hast allayed
The thirst I had of knowledge, and vouchsafed
This friendly condescension to relate
Things else by me unsearchable, now heard
With wonder, but delight, and, as is due,
With glory attributed to the high
Creator? Something yet of doubt remains,
Which only thy solution can resolve.
When I behold this goodly frame, this world
Of Heaven and earth consisting, and compute
Their magnitudes, this earth a spot, a grain,
An atom, with the firmament compared
And all her numbered[2] stars, that seem to roll
Spaces incomprehensible (for such
Their distance argues, and their swift return
Diurnal), merely to officiate[3] light

[1] i. e. continued. [2] Numerous. [3] Furnish.

Round this opacous[1] earth, this punctual spot.[2]
One day and night, in all their vast survey
Useless besides; reasoning I oft admire,
How nature, wise and frugal, could commit
Such disproportions, with superfluous hand
So many nobler bodies to create,
Greater so manifold, to this one use,
For aught appears, and on their orbs impose
Such restless revolution day by day
Repeated; while the sedentary earth,
That better might with far less compass move,
Served by more noble than herself, attains
Her end without least motion, and receives,
As tribute, such a sumless journey brought
Of incorporeal speed, her warmth and light;
Speed, to describe whose swiftness number fails."
So spake our sire, and by his countenance seemed
Entering on studious thoughts abstruse, which Eve
Perceiving, where she sat retired in sight,
With lowliness majestic from her seat,
And grace that won who saw to wish her stay,
Rose, and went forth among her fruits and flowers,
To visit how they prospered, bud and bloom,
Her nursery; they at her coming sprung,
And, touched by her fair tendance, gladlier grew
Yet went she not, as not with such discourse
Delighted, or not capable her ear
Of what was high; such pleasure she reserved,
Adam relating, she sole auditress:
Her husband the relater she preferred
Before the angel, and of him to ask
Chose rather; he, she knew, would intermix
Grateful digressions, and solve high dispute
With conjugal caresses; from his lip
Not words alone pleased her. Oh! when meet now

[1] Dense, not transparent.

[2] He had called this earth "a spot" in ver. 17; he calls it here "this punctual spot," a spot no bigger than a point, compared with the firmament and fixed stars. Dr. Bentley says that the author designed "punctal;" but "punctual" is derived from *punctum*, a point; and as the English language was before in possession of the word "punctual" we may suppose that he chose to make use of this word rather than to coin a new one, especially since this signifies the same as the other.—*Newton.*

Such pairs, in love and mutual honour joined?
With goddess-like demeanour forth she went,
Not unattended, for on her as queen
A pomp of winning graces waited still,
And from about her shot darts of desire
Into all eyes to wish her still in sight.
And Raphael now, to Adam's doubt proposed,
Benevolent and facile thus replied:
"To ask or search I blame thee not, for Heaven
Is as the book of God before thee set,
Wherein to read his wondrous works, and learn
His seasons, hours, or days, or months, or years:
This to attain, whether Heaven move or earth,
Imports not, if thou reckon right; the rest
From man or angel the great Architect
Did wisely to conceal, and not divulge
His secrets to be scanned by them who ought
Rather admire; or if they list to try
Conjecture, he his fabric of the Heavens
Hath left to their disputes, perhaps to move
His laughter at their quaint opinions wide
Hereafter, when they come to model Heaven
And calculate the stars, how they will wield
The mighty frame; how build, unbuild, contrive
To save appearances; how gird the sphere
With centric and eccentric[1] scribbled o'er,
Cycle and epicycle, orb in orb:
Already by thy reasoning this I guess,
Who art to lead thy offspring, and supposest
That bodies bright and greater should not serve
The less not bright, nor Heaven such journeys run,
Earth sitting still, when she alone receives
The benefit. Consider first, that great
Or bright infers not excellence: the earth
Though, in comparison of Heaven, so small,
Nor glistering, may of solid good contain
More plenty than the sun that barren shines,
Whose virtue on itself works no effect,
But in the fruitful earth; there first received,

[1] "Cycle" or "concentric" are such spheres whose centre is the same with, and "eccentric" such whose centres are different from, that of the earth. "Cycle" is a circle; "epicycle" is a circle upon another circle. Expedients of the Ptolemaics to solve the apparent difficulties in their system.—*Richardson*

His beams, unactive else, their vigour find.
Yet not to earth are those bright luminaries
Officious, but to thee, earth's habitant.
And for the Heaven's wide circuit, let it speak
The Maker's high magnificence, who built
So spacious, and his line stretched out so far;
That man may know he dwells not in his own;
An edifice too large for him to fill,
Lodged in a small partition, and the rest
Ordained for uses to his Lord best known.
The swiftness of those circles attribute,
Though numberless, to his omnipotence,
That to corporeal substances could add
Speed almost spiritual: me thou think'st not slow,
Who since the morning hour set out from Heaven,
Where God resides, and ere mid-day arrived
In Eden, distance inexpressible
By numbers that have name. But this I urge,
Admitting motion in the Heavens, to show
Invalid that which thee to doubt it moved;
Not that I so affirm, though so it seem
To thee who hast thy dwelling here on earth.
God, to remove his ways from human sense,
Placed Heaven from earth so far, that earthly sight,
If it presume, might err in things too high,
And no advantage gain. What if the sun
Be centre to the world, and other stars,
By his attractive virtue and their own
Incited, dance about him various rounds?
Their wandering course now high, now low, then hid,
Progressive, retrograde, or standing still,
In six thou seest;[1] and what if seventh to these

[1] In the "moon," and the "five other wandering fires," as they are called, v. 177. Their motions are evident; and what if the earth should be a seventh planet, and move three different motions, though to thee insensible? The "three different motions" which the Copernicans attribute to the earth are—the "diurnal," round her own axis; the "annual," round the sun; and the "motion of libration," as it is called, whereby the earth so proceeds in her orbit as that her axis is constantly parallel to the axis of the world.

"Which else to several spheres thou must ascribe," &c.

You must either ascribe these motions to several spheres crossing and thwarting one another with crooked and indirect turnings and windings; or you must attribute them to the earth, and "save the sun

The planet earth, so stedfast though she seem,
Insensibly three different motions move?
Which else to several spheres thou must ascribe,
Moved contrary with thwart obliquities,
Or save the sun his labour, and that swift
Nocturnal and diurnal rhomb supposed
Invisible else, above all stars, the wheel
Of day and night; which needs not thy belief,
If earth industrious of herself fetch day
Travelling east, and with her part averse
From the sun's beam meet night, her other part
Still luminous by his ray. What if that light,
Sent from her through the wide transpicuous air,
To the terrestrial moon be as a star
Enlightening her by day, as she by night
This earth? reciprocal, if land be there,
Fields and inhabitants: her spots thou seest
As clouds,[1] and clouds may rain, and rain produce
Fruits in her softened soil, for some to eat
Allotted there; and other suns, perhaps,
With their attendant moons thou wilt descry,
Communicating male and female light,[2]

his labour," and the *primum mobile* too, "that swift nocturnal and diurnal rhomb." It may be observed, that when Milton uses a Greek word, he frequently subjoins the English of it, as he does here, "the wheel of day and night." So he calls the *primum mobile;* and this *primum mobile* in the ancient astronomy was an imaginary sphere above those of the planets and fixed stars, and therefore said by our author to be "supposed" and "invisible above all stars." This was conceived to be the first mover, and to carry all the lower spheres round along with it; by its rapidity communicating to them a motion whereby they revolved in twenty-four hours. "Which needs not thy belief, if earth," &c. But there is no need to believe this, if the earth, by revolving round on her own axis from west to east in twenty-four hours ("travelling east"), enjoys day in that half of her globe which is turned towards the sun, and is covered with night in the other half which is turned away from the sun.—*Newton.*

[1] It seems by this and by another passage, v. 419, as if our author thought that the spots in the moon were clouds and vapours; but the most probable opinion is that they are her seas and waters, which reflect only part of the sun's rays, and absorb the rest.

[2] The suns communicate male, and the moons female light. And thus Pliny mentions it as a tradition, that the sun is a masculine star, drying all things; on the contrary, the moon is a soft and feminine star, dissolving humours; and so the balance of nature is preserved, some of the stars binding the elements, and others loosing them.—*Newton.*

Which two great sexes animate the world,
Stored in each orb, perhaps, with some that live.
For such vast room in nature unpossessed
By living soul, desert and desolate,
Only to shine, yet scarce to contribute
Each orb a glimpse of light, conveyed so far
Down to this habitable,[1] which returns
Light back to them, is obvious to dispute.
But whether thus these things, or whether not,
Whether the sun predominant in Heaven
Rise on the earth, or earth rise on the sun,
He from the east his flaming road begin,
Or she from west her silent course advance
With inoffensive pace that spinning sleeps[2]
On her soft axle, while she paces even,
And bears thee soft with the smooth air along;
Solicit not thy thoughts with matters hid;
Leave them to God above, him serve and fear:
Of other creatures, as him pleases best,
Wherever placed, let him dispose: joy thou
In what he gives to thee, this Paradise
And thy fair Eve; Heaven is for thee too high
To know what passes there; be lowly wise:
Think only what concerns thee and thy being,
Dream not of other worlds, what creatures there
Live, in what state, condition, or degree,
Contented that thus far hath been revealed
Not of earth only, but of highest Heaven.

To whom thus Adam, cleared of doubt, replied:
"How fully hast thou satisfied me, pure
Intelligence of Heaven, angel serene!
And, freed from intricacies, taught to live
The easiest way, nor with perplexing thoughts

[1] Supply, *globe*, or *earth*.

[2] Metaphors taken from a top, of which Virgil makes a whole simile. Æn. vii. 378. It is an objection to the Copernican system that if the earth moved round on her axle in twenty-four hours, we should be sensible of the rapidity and violence of the motion; and therefore to obviate this objection, it is not only said that "she advances her silent course—

"With inoffensive pace *that spinning sleeps*
On her soft axle;"

but it is further added to explain it still more—

"*while she paces even*,
And bears thee soft with the smooth air along;"

for the air, the atmosphere, moves as well as the earth.—*Newton*.

To interrupt the sweet of life, from which
God hath bid dwell far off all anxious cares,
And not molest us, unless we ourselves
Seek them with wandering thoughts, and notions vain
But apt the mind or fancy is to rove
Unchecked, and of her roving is no end;
Till warned, or by experience taught, she learn,
That not to know at large of things remote
From use, obscure and subtle, but to know
That which before us lies in daily life,
Is the prime wisdom; what is more, is fume
Or emptiness, or fond impertinence,
And renders us in things that most concern
Unpractised, unprepared, and still to seek.
Therefore from this high pitch let us descend
A lower flight, and speak of things at hand
Useful, whence haply mention may arise
Of something not unseasonable to ask
By sufferance, and thy wonted favour deigned.
Thee I have heard relating what was done
Ere my remembrance: now hear me relate
My story, which perhaps thou hast not heard;
And day is yet not spent; till then thou seest
How subtly to detain thee I devise,
Inviting thee to hear while I relate,
Fond, were it not in hope of thy reply:
For while I sit with thee, I seem in Heaven.
And sweeter thy discourse is to my ear
Than fruits of palm-tree pleasantest to thirst
And hunger both, from labour, at the hour
Of sweet repast: they satiate, and soon fill,
Though pleasant; but thy words, with grace divine
Imbued, bring to their sweetness no satiety."
To whom thus Raphael answered heavenly meek:
"Nor are thy lips ungraceful, sire of men,
Nor tongue ineloquent; for God on thee
Abundantly his gifts hath also poured
Inward and outward both, his image fair;
Speaking or mute all comeliness and grace
Attends thee, and each word, each motion forms;
Nor less think we in Heaven of thee on earth
Than of our fellow-servant, and inquire
Gladly into the ways of God with man:
For God we see hath honoured thee, and set

On man his equal love; say therefore on,
For I that day was absent, as befell,
Bound on a voyage uncouth and obscure,
Far on excursion toward the gates of Hell;
Squared in full legion (such command we had)
To see that none thence issued forth a spy,
Or enemy, while God was in his work;
Lest he, incensed at such eruption bold,
Destruction with creation might have mixed.
Not that they durst without his leave attempt,
But us he sends upon his high behests
For state, as sovran King, and to inure
Our prompt obedience. Fast we found, fast shut
The dismal gates, and barricadoed strong;
But long ere our approaching heard within
Noise, other than the sound of dance or song,
Torment, and loud lament, and furious rage.
Glad we returned up to the coasts of light
Ere sabbath evening: so we had in charge.
But thy relation now; for I attend,
Pleased with thy words no less than thou with mine."
So spake the godlike power, and thus our sire:
"For man to tell how human life began
Is hard; for who himself beginning knew?
Desire with thee still longer to converse
Induced me. As new waked from soundest sleep,
Soft on the flowery herb I found me laid
In balmy sweat, which with his beams the sun
Soon dried, and on the reeking moisture fed.
Straight toward Heaven my wondering eyes I turned.
And gazed[1] a while the ample sky; till, raised
By quick instinctive motion, up I sprung,
As thitherward endeavouring, and upright
Stood on my feet; about me round I saw
Hill, dale, and shady woods, and sunny plains
And liquid lapse of murmuring streams; by these
Creatures that lived, and moved, and walked, or flew,
Birds on the branches warbling; all things smiled;
With fragrance and with joy my heart o'erflowed.
Myself I then perused, and limb by limb
Surveyed, and sometimes went, and sometimes ran
With supple joints, as lively vigour led:
But who I was, or where, or from what cause,

[1] Gazed at.

Knew not; to speak I tried, and forthwith spake;
My tongue obeyed, and readily could name
Whate'er I saw.[1] 'Thou sun,' said I, 'fair light,
And thou enlightened earth, so fresh and gay,
Ye hills and dales, ye rivers, woods, and plains,
And ye that live and move, fair creatures, tell,
Tell, if ye saw, how came I thus, how here?
Not of myself; by some great Maker, then,
In goodness and in power pre-eminent;
Tell me, how may I know him, how adore,
From whom I have that thus I móve and live,
And feel that I am happier than I know?'
While thus I called, and strayed I knew not whither,
From where I first drew air, and first beheld
This happy light, when answer none returned,
On a green shady bank, profuse of flowers,
Pensive I sat me down; there gentle sleep
First found me, and with soft oppression seized
My drowsied sense, untroubled, though I thought
I then was passing to my former state
Insensible, and forthwith to dissolve:
When suddenly stood at my head a dream,
Whose inward apparition gently moved
My fancy to believe I yet had being,
And lived: One came, methought, of shape divine,
And said, 'Thy mansion wants thee, Adam; rise,
First man, of men innumerable ordained
First father! called by thee, I come thy guide
To the garden of bliss, thy seat prepared.'
So saying, by the hand he took me raised,
And over fields and waters, as in air
Smooth sliding without step, last led me up
A woody mountain, whose high top was plain,
A circuit wide, enclosed, with goodliest trees
Planted, with walks, and bowers, that what I saw
Of earth before scarce pleasant seemed. Each tree
Loaden with fairest fruit, that hung to the eye
Tempting, stirred in me sudden appetite
To pluck and eat; whereat I waked, and found
Before mine eyes all real, as the dream
Had lively shadowed: here had new begun
My wandering, had not he who was my guide
Up hither, from among the trees appeared,

[1] But in ver. 352, Adam ascribes this capability to the gift of God.

Presence divine. Rejoicing, but with awe,
In adoration at his feet I fell
Submiss: he reared me, and 'Whom thou sought'st I am,'
Said mildly, 'Author of all this thou seest
Above, or round about thee, or beneath.
This Paradise I give thee; count it thine
To till and keep, and of the fruit to eat:
Of every tree that in the garden grows
Eat freely with glad heart; fear here no dearth:
But of the tree whose operation brings
Knowledge of good and ill, which I have set
The pledge of thy obedience and thy faith,
Amid the garden by the tree of life,
Remember what I warn thee, shun to taste,
And shun the bitter consequence; for know,
The day thou eat'st thereof, my sole command
Transgressed, inevitably thou shalt die,
From that day mortal; and this happy state
Shalt lose, expelled from hence into a world
Of woe and sorrow.' Sternly he pronounced
The rigid interdiction, which resounds
Yet dreadful in mine ear, though in my choice
Not to incur, but soon his clear aspect
Returned, and gracious purpose thus renewed:
'Not only these fair bounds, but all the earth,
To thee and to thy race I give; as lords
Possess it, and all things that therein live,
Or live in sea, or air, beast, fish, and fowl.
In sign whereof each bird and beast behold
After their kinds. I bring them to receive
From thee their names, and pay thee fealty
With low subjection. understand the same
Of fish within their watery residence,
Not hither summoned, since they cannot change
Their element to draw the thinner air.'
"As thus he spake, each bird and beast behold
Approaching two and two; these cowering low
With blandishment; each bird stooped on his wing
I named them,[1] as they passed, and understood
Their nature, with such knowledge God endued

[1] Wonderful was the knowledge God bestowed on Adam, nor that least which concerned the naming of things aright, as Cicero agrees with Pythagoras: "Qui primus, quod summæ sapientiæ Pythagoræ visum est, omnibus rebus nomina imposuit." Tusc. Disp. lib. i. sect. 25.—*Hume.*

My sudden apprehension: but in these
I found not what methought I wanted still;
And to the heavenly vision thus presumed:
"'O by what name, for thou above all these,
Above mankind, or aught than mankind higher,
Surpassest far my naming; how may I
Adore thee, Author of this universe,
And all this good to man? for whose well being
So amply, and with hands so liberal,
Thou hast provided all things: but with me
I see not who partakes. In solitude
What happiness? who can enjoy alone,
Or all enjoying, what contentment find?'
Thus I, presumptuous; and the Vision bright,
As with a smile more brightened, thus replied:
"'What call'st thou solitude? Is not the earth
With various living creatures, and the air,
Replenished, and all these at thy command
To come and play before thee? Know'st thou not
Their language and their ways? They also know,
And reason not contemptibly: with these
Find pastime, and bear rule; thy realm is large'
So spake the universal Lord, and seemed
So ordering. I, with leave of speech implored,
And humble deprecation, thus replied:
"'Let not my words offend thee, heavenly Power,
My Maker, be propitious while I speak.
Hast thou not made me here thy substitute,
And these inferior far beneath me set?
Among unequals what society
Can sort, what harmony or true delight?
Which must be mutual, in proportion due
Given and received; but in disparity
The one intense, the other still remiss,
Cannot well suit with either, but soon prove
Tedious alike. Of fellowship I speak,
Such as I seek, fit to participate
All rational delight, wherein the brute
Cannot be human consort: they rejoice
Each with their kind, lion with lioness;
So fitly them in pairs thou hast combined:
Much less can bird with beast, or fish with fowl,
So well converse; nor with the ox the ape;
Worse then can man with beast, and least of all'

" Whereto the Almighty answered, not displeased:
'A nice and subtle happiness, I see,
Thou to thyself proposest, in the choice
Of thy associates, Adam, and wilt taste
No pleasure, though in pleasure, solitary.
What think'st thou then of me, and this my state?
Seem I to thee sufficiently possessed
Of happiness, or not? who am alone
From all eternity, for none I know
Second to me, or like, equal much less.
How have I, then, with whom to hold converse
Save with the creatures which I made, and those
To me inferior, infinite descents
Beneath what other creatures are to thee?'
" He ceased: I lowly answered: 'To attain
The height and depth of thy eternal ways
All human thoughts come short, Supreme of things!
Thou in thyself art perfect, and in thee
Is no deficience found; not so is man,
But in degree; the cause of his desire
By conversation with his like to help,
Or solace his defects. No need that thou
Shouldst propagate, already infinite,
And through all numbers absolute,[1] though one;
But man by number is to manifest
His single imperfection,[2] and beget
Like of his like, his image multiplied,
In unity defective, which requires
Collateral love, and dearest amity.
Thou in thy secresy although alone,
Best with thyself accompanied, seek'st not
Social communication, yet so pleased
Canst raise thy creature to what height thou wilt
Of union or communion, deified:
I by conversing cannot these erect
From prone, nor in their ways complacence find.'
Thus I emboldened spake, and freedom used
Permissive, and acceptance found, which gained
This answer from the gracious voice divine:
" 'Thus far to try thee, Adam, I was pleased,

[1] A Latin term, "omnibus numeris absolutus," to denote great and complete perfection.

[2] *i. e.* the imperfection of him single.

And find thee knowing not of beasts alone,
Which thou hast rightly named; but of thyself,
Expressing well the spirit within thee free,
My image, not imparted to the brute:
Whose fellowship therefore, unmeet for thee,
Good reason was thou freely shouldst dislike,
And be so minded still: I, ere thou spak'st,
Knew it not good for man to be alone,[1]
And no such company as then thou sawest
Intended thee, for trial only brought,
To see how thou couldst judge of fit and meet:
What next I bring shall please thee, be assured,
Thy likeness, thy fit help, thy other self,
Thy wish exactly to thy heart's desire.'
"He ended, or I heard no more, for now
My earthly by his heavenly overpowered,[2]
Which it had long stood under, strained to the height
In that celestial colloquy sublime,
As with an object that excels the sense
Dazzled and spent, sunk down, and sought repair
Of sleep, which instantly fell on me, called
By nature as in aid, and closed mine eyes.
Mine eyes he closed, but open left the cell
Of fancy, my internal sight, by which
Abstract as in a trance methought I saw,
Though sleeping, where I lay, and saw the shape
Still glorious before whom awake I stood;
Who, stooping, opened my left side, and took
From thence a rib, with cordial spirits warm,
And life-blood streaming fresh: wide was the wound,
But suddenly with flesh filled up and healed:
The rib he formed and fashioned with his hands;
Under his forming hands a creature grew,
Manlike, but different sex, so lovely fair,
That what seemed fair in all the world, seemed now

[1] Cf. Genesis ii. 18.

[2] The scripture says only, that "the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam" (Gen. ii. 21), and our author endeavours to give some account how it was effected. Adam was overpowered by conversing with so superior a being, his faculties having been all strained and exerted to the highest; and now he sunk down quite dazzled and spent, and sought repair of sleep, which instantly fell on him, and closed his eyes. "Mine eyes he closed," says he again, turning the words, and making sleep a person, as the ancient poets often do.—*Newton.*

Mean; or in her summed up, in her contained,
And in her looks, which from that time infused
Sweetness into my heart, unfelt before,
And into all things from her air inspired
The spirit of love and amorous delight.
She disappeared, and left me dark;[1] I waked
To find her, or for ever to deplore
Her loss, and other pleasures all abjure.
When out of hope, behold her, not far off,
Such as I saw her in my dream, adorned
With what all earth or Heaven could bestow
To make her amiable. On she came,
Led by her heavenly Maker, though unseen,
And guided by his voice, nor uninformed
Of nuptial sanctity and marriage rites:
Grace was in all her steps, Heaven in her eye,
In every gesture dignity and love.
I, overjoyed, could not forbear aloud:
"'This turn hath made amends: thou hast fulfilled
Thy words, Creator bounteous and benign,
Giver of all things fair! but fairest this
Of all thy gifts! nor enviest. I now see
Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, myself
Before me: woman is her name, of man
Extracted; for this cause he shall forego
Father and mother, and to his wife adhere;
And they shall be one flesh, one heart, one soul.'
"She heard me thus, and though divinely brought,
Yet innocence and virgin modesty,
Her virtue and the conscience of her worth,
That would be wooed, and not unsought be won,
Not obvious, not obtrusive, but retired,
The more desirable; or, to say all,
Nature herself, though pure of sinful thought,
Wrought in her so, that seeing me she turned:
I followed her; she what was honour knew,
And with obsequious majesty approved

[1] She that was my light vanished, and left me dark and comfortless For "light" is, in almost all languages, a metaphor for "joy" and "comfort," and "darkness" for the contrary. As Dr. Pearce observes, it is something of the same way of thinking that Milton uses in his sonnet on his deceased wife. After having described her as appearing to him, he says—

"She fled, and day brought back my night." *Newton.*

My pleaded reason. To the nuptial bower
I led her blushing like the morn: all Heaven
And happy constellations on that hour
Shed their selectest influence; the earth
Gave sign of gratulation, and each hill;
Joyous the birds; fresh gales and gentle airs
Whispered it to the woods, and from their wings
Flung rose, flung odours from the spicy shrub,
Disporting, till the amorous bird of night
Sung spousal, and bid haste the evening star
On his hill top,[1] to light the bridal lamp.
"Thus have I told thee all my state, and brought
My story to the sum of earthly bliss
Which I enjoy, and must confess to find
In all things else delight indeed, but such
As, used or not, works in the mind no change,
Nor vehement desire: these delicacies
I mean of taste, sight, smell, herbs, fruits, and flowers,
Walks, and the melody of birds; but here
Far otherwise: transported I behold,
Transported touch; here passion first I felt,
Commotion strange, in all enjoyments else
Superior and unmoved, here only weak
Against the charm of beauty's powerful glance.
Or nature failed in me, and left some part
Not proof enough such object to sustain;
Or, from my side subducting, took perhaps
More than enough; at least, on her bestowed
Too much of ornament, in outward show
Elaborate, of inward less exact.
For well I understand in the prime end
Of nature her the inferior, in the mind
And inward faculties, which most excel,
In outward also her resembling less

[1] The "evening star" is said to "light the bridal lamp," in allusion to the ancient custom of conducting the bride home to her bridegroom by torchlight. "On his hill top" also refers to a classic notion, it being supposed that when this star appeared eastward in the morning, it rose on mount Ida. Compare Spenser, F. Q. i. 2, 1:—

"Phœbus' fiery car
In haste was climbing up the eastern hill."

And Shakspeare, Romeo and Juliet, act ii.:—

"Now is the sun upon the highmost hill
Of this day's journey."

His image who made both, and less expressing
The character of that dominion given
O'er other creatures; yet when I approach
Her loveliness, so absolute[1] she seems,
And in herself complete, so well to know
Her own, that what she wills to do or say
Seems wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best;
All higher knowledge in her presence falls
Degraded; wisdom in discourse with her
Loses discountenanced, and like folly shows;
Authority and reason on her wait,
As one intended first, not after made
Occasionally; and, to consummate all,
Greatness of mind and nobleness their seat
Build in her loveliest, and create an awe
About her, as a guard angelic placed."

To whom the angel, with contracted brow:
"Accuse not nature, she hath done her part;
Do thou but thine, and be not diffident
Of wisdom; she deserts thee not, if thou
Dismiss not her, when most thou need'st her nigh,
By attributing overmuch to things
Less excellent, as thou thyself perceiv'st.
For what admir'st thou, what transports thee so?
An outside? fair, no doubt, and worthy well
Thy cherishing, thy honouring, and thy love,
Not thy subjection: weigh with her thyself;
Then value: oft-times nothing profits more
Than self-esteem, grounded on just and right
Well managed; of that skill the more thou know'st,
The more she will acknowledge thee her head,
And to realities yield all her shows:
Made so adorn[2] for thy delight the more,
So awful, that with honour thou mayst love
Thy mate, who sees when thou art seen least wise.
But if the sense of touch whereby mankind
Is propagated seem such dear delight
Beyond all other, think the same vouchsafed
To cattle and each beast; which would not be
To them made common and divulged, if aught
Therein enjoyed were worthy to subdue
The soul of man, or passion in him move.

[1] *i. e.* perfect, complete.
[2] *i. e.* adorned, decked: an Italian form.

What higher in her society thou find'st
Attractive, human, rational, love still;
In loving thou dost well, in passion not,
Wherein true love consists not; love refines
The thoughts, and heart enlarges, hath his seat
In reason, and is judicious, is the scale
By which to heavenly love thou may'st ascend,
Not sunk in carnal pleasure; for which cause
Among the beasts no mate for thee was found."

To whom thus, half abashed, Adam replied:
"Neither her outside formed so fair, nor aught
In procreation common to all kinds
(Though higher of the genial bed by far,
And with mysterious reverence I deem),
So much delights me, as those graceful acts,
Those thousand decencies that daily flow
From all her words and actions mixed with love
And sweet compliance, which declare unfeigned
Union of mind, or in us both one soul;
Harmony to behold in wedded pair
More grateful than harmonious sound to the ear.
Yet these subject not: I to thee disclose
What inward thence I feel, not therefore foiled,
Who meet with various objects, from the sense
Variously representing; yet, still free,
Approve the best, and follow what I approve.
To love thou blamest me not; for love, thou say'st,
Leads up to Heaven, is both the way and guide;
Bear with me, then, if lawful what I ask.
Love not the heavenly spirits? and how their love
Express they? by looks only? or do they mix
Irradiance, virtual or immediate touch?"

To whom the angel, with a smile that glowed
Celestial rosy red, love's proper hue,
Answered: "Let it suffice thee that thou know'st
Us happy, and without love no happiness.
Whatever pure thou in the body enjoy'st
(And pure thou wert created) we enjoy
In eminence, and obstacle find none
Of membrane, joint, or limb, exclusive bars;
Easier than air with air, if spirits embrace,
Total they mix, union of pure with pure
Desiring; nor restrained conveyance need
As flesh to mix with flesh, or soul with soul.

But I can now no more;[1] the parting sun
Beyond the earth's green cape and verdant isles
Hesperian sets, my signal to depart.
Be strong, live happy, and love, but first of all
Him whom to love is to obey, and keep
His great command; take heed lest passion sway
Thy judgment to do aught which else free will
Would not admit; thine and of all thy sons
The weal or woe in thee is placed: beware!
I in thy persevering shall rejoice,
And all the blest: stand fast; to stand or fall
Free in thine own arbitrement it lies.
Perfect within, no outward aid require;
And all temptation to transgress repel."
So saying, he arose; whom Adam thus
Followed with benediction: "Since to part,
Go, heavenly guest, ethereal messenger,
Sent from whose sovran goodness I adore.
Gentle to me and affable hath been
Thy condescension, and shall be honoured ever
With grateful memory: thou to mankind
Be good and friendly still, and oft return."
So parted they: the angel up to Heaven
From the thick shade, and Adam to his bower

[1] The conversation was now become of such a nature that it was proper to put an end to it; and now "the parting sun beyond the earth's green cape," beyond Cape de Verd, the most western point of Africa; "and verdant isles," the islands of Cape de Verd, a knot of small islands lying off Cape de Verd, subject to the Portuguese; "Hesperian sets," sets westward; from Hesperus, the evening star, appearing there, "my signal to depart," for he was only to stay till the evening, v. 376—

"for these mid hours, till evening rise,
I have at will." *Newton.*

END OF THE EIGHTH BOOK

BOOK IX.

THE ARGUMENT.

Satan, having compassed the earth, with meditated guile returns as a mist by night into Paradise; enters into the serpent sleeping. Adam and Eve in the morning go forth to their labours, which Eve proposes to divide in several places, each labouring apart: Adam consents not, alleging the danger lest that enemy, of whom they were forewarned, should attempt her found alone: Eve, loath to be thought not circumspect or firm enough, urges her going apart, the rather desirous to make trial of her strength; Adam at last yields. The serpent finds her alone; his subtle approach, first gazing, then speaking, with much flattery extolling Eve above all other creatures. Eve, wondering to hear the serpent speak, asks how he attained to human speech and such understanding not till now; the serpent answers, that by tasting of a certain tree in the garden he attained both to speech and reason, till then void of both; Eve requires him to bring her to that tree, and finds it to be the tree of knowledge forbidden: the serpent, now grown bolder, with many wiles and arguments induces her at length to eat; she, pleased with the taste, deliberates a while whether to impart thereof to Adam or not; at last brings him of the fruit; relates what persuaded her to eat thereof: Adam, at first amazed, but perceiving her lost, resolves, through vehemence of love, to perish with her; and, extenuating the trespass, eats also of the fruit: the effects thereof in them both; they seek to cover their nakedness; then fall to variance and accusation of one another.

No more of talk where God or angel guest
With man, as with his friend, familiar used
To sit indulgent, and with him partake
Rural repast, permitting him the while
Venial discourse unblamed: I now must change
Those notes to tragic; foul distrust, and breach
Disloyal on the part of man, revolt,
And disobedience; on the part of Heaven
Now alienated, distance and distaste,

Anger and just rebuke, and judgment given,
That brought into this world a world of woe,
Sin and her shadow Death, and misery[1]
Death's harbinger: sad task, yet argument
Not less but more heroic than the wrath
Of stern Achilles[2] on his foe pursued
Thrice fugitive about Troy wall; or rage
Of Turnus for Lavinia[3] disespoused;
Or Neptune's ire, or Juno's, that so long
Perplexed the Greek and Cytherea's son;[4]
If answerable style I can obtain
Of my celestial patroness, who deigns
Her nightly visitation unimplored,[5]
And dictates to me slumbering, or inspires
Easy my unpremeditated verse:
Since first this subject for heroic song
Pleased me long choosing, and beginning late;[6]
Not sedulous by nature to indite
Wars, hitherto the only argument
Heroic deemed, chief mastery to dissect
With long and tedious havoc fabled knights
In battles feigned; the better fortitude
Of patience and heroic martyrdom
Unsung; or to describe races and games,[7]
Or tilting furniture, emblazoned shields,[8]
Impresses quaint,[9] caparisons and steeds;

By "misery" here, Milton means sickness, disease, and all sorts of mortal pains. So when in xi. Michael is going to name the several diseases in the lazar-house represented to Adam in a vision, he says, ver. 475:—

"that thou may'st know
What *misery* the inabstinence of Eve
Shall bring on men." —*Pearce.*

[2] The argument of the Iliad. [3] The argument of the Æneid.

[4] Cupid, the son of Venus.

[5] Milton was accustomed to study at night.

[6] Milton had early intended to write an epic poem on the subject of King Arthur.

[7] As the ancient poets have done; Homer, in the twenty-third book of the Iliad; Virgil, in the fifth book of the Æneid; and Statius, in the sixth book of his Thebaid; or "tilts" and "tournaments," which are often the subjects of the modern poets, as Ariosto, Spenser, and the like.—*Newton.*

[8] Uncommon witty devices or emblems, painted on their shields usually with a motto. We remember one which was not painted; 'twas a blank shield; the motto imported that the wearer would win

Bases and tinsel trappings, gorgeous knights
At joust or tournament; then marshalled feast
Served up in hall with sewers and seneschals;
The skill of artifice or office mean,
Not that which justly gives heroic name
To person or to poem. Me of these
Nor skilled, nor studious, higher argument
Remains, sufficient of itself to raise
That name, unless an age too late, or cold
Climate, or years,[1] damp my intended wing
Depressed, and much they may, if all be mine,
Not hers who brings it nightly to my ear.
The sun was sunk, and after him the star
Of Hesperus, whose office is to bring
Twilight upon the earth, short arbiter
'Twixt day and night,[2] and now from end to end
Night's hemisphere had veiled the horizon round:
When Satan, who late fled before the threats
Of Gabriel out of Eden, now improved
In meditated fraud and malice, bent
On man's destruction, maugre what might hap
Of heavier on himself, fearless returned.
By night he fled, and at midnight returned
From compassing the earth, cautious of day,
Since Uriel, regent of the sun, descried
His entrance, and forewarned the cherubim
That kept their watch; thence full of anguish driven,
The space of seven continued nights he rode
With darkness; thrice the equinoctial line[3]

ty his valour wherewith to adorn it. "Bases," from *bas* (French), they fall low to the ground; they are also called the housing, from *houssé*, bedaggled. "Sewers," from *asseoir* (French), to set down; for those officers set the dishes on the table; in old French, *asseours*. "Seneschals," from two German words, signifying a servant of a family; and was applied by way of eminence to the principal servant, the steward.—*Richardson.*

[1] Milton was nearly sixty years of age when this poem was published.

[2] This expression was probably borrowed from the beginning of Sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia, where, speaking of the sun about the time of the equinox, he calls him "an indifferent arbiter between the night and the day."

[3] *i. e.* he was three days moving round from east to west, as the sun does, but always on the opposite side of the globe in darkness.

He circled;[1] four times crossed the car of night
From pole to pole, travérsing each colúre;[2]
On the eighth returned, and on the coast averse
From entrance or cherubic watch, by stealth
Found unsuspected way. There was a place,
Now not, though sin, not time, first wrought the change,
Where Tigris at the foot of Paradise
Into a gulf shot under ground, till part
Rose up a fountain by the tree of life;
In with the river sunk, and with it rose
Satan, involved in rising mist; then sought
Where to he hid; sea he had searched, and land,
From Eden over Pontus,[3] and the pool
Mæotis, up beyond the river Ob;
Downward as far antarctic; and in length
West from Orontes to the ocean barred
At Darien; thence to the land where flows
Ganges and Indus: thus the orb he roamed
With narrow search, and with inspection deep
Considered every creature, which of all
Most opportune might serve his wiles, and found

[1] *i. e.* did not move directly on with the night as before, but crossed over from N. to S. and from S. to N. pole.

[2] The "colures" are two great circles, intersecting each other at right angles in the poles of the world, and encompassing the earth from N. to S. and from S. to N. Hence, observes Newton, as "Satan was moving from pole to pole, at the same time the car of night was moving from east to west, if he would keep still in the shade of night as he desired, he could not move in a straight line, but must move obliquely, and thereby cross the two colures."

[3] "He searched" both "sea and land" northward "from Eden over Pontus," Pontus Euxinus, the Euxine Sea, now the Black Sea, above Constantinople, "and the pool Mæotis," Palus Mæotis, above the Black Sea, "up beyond the river Ob," Ob, or Oby, a great river of Muscovy near the northern pole. "Downward as far as antarctic," as far southward; the northern hemisphere being elevated on our globes, the north is called "up" and the south "downward;" "antarctic," south, the contrary to "arctic" north, from ἄρκτος, *the bear*, the most conspicuous constellation near the north pole; but no particular place is mentioned near the south pole, there being all sea or land unknown. "And in length," as north is up and south is down, so in length is east or west; "west from Orontes," a river of Syria, westward of Eden, running into the Mediterranean, "to the ocean barred at Darien," the isthmus of Darien in the West Indies, a neck of land that joins North and South America together, and hinders the ocean as it were with a bar from flowing between them; and the metaphor of "the ocean barred" is in allusion to Job xxxviii. 10.—*Newton.*

The serpent subtlest beast of all the field.
Him after long debate, irresolute
Of thoughts revolved, his final sentence chose
Fit vessel, fittest imp[1] of fraud, in whom
To enter, and his dark suggestions hide
From sharpest sight; for in the wily snake,
Whatever sleights, none would suspicious mark,
As from his wit and native subtlety
Proceeding; which, in other beasts observed,
Doubt might beget of diabolic power
Active within beyond the sense of brute.
Thus he resolved, but first from inward grief
His bursting passion into plaints thus poured:
O earth! how like to Heaven, if not preferred
More justly, seat worthier of gods, as built
With second thoughts, reforming what was old!
For what God, after better, worse would build?
Terrestrial Heaven, danced round by other heavens
That shine, yet bear their bright officious lamps,
Light above light, for thee alone, as seems,
In thee concentring all their precious beams
Of sacred influence! As God in Heaven
Is centre, yet extends to all, so thou
Centring receiv'st from all those orbs, in thee,
Not in themselves, all their known virtue appears
Productive in herb, plant, and nobler birth
Of creatures animate with gradual life
Of growth, sense, reason, all summed up in man.
With what delight could I have walked thee round,
If I could joy in aught, sweet interchange
Of hill and valley, rivers, woods, and plains,
Now land, now sea, and shores with forest crowned,
Rocks, dens, and caves! but I in none of these
Find place or refuge; and the more I see
Pleasures about me, so much more I feel
Torment within me, as from the hateful siege
Of contraries; all good to me becomes
Bane, and in Heaven much worse would be my state.
But neither here seek I, no, nor in Heaven
To dwell, unless by mastering Heaven's supreme;
Nor hope to be myself less miserable

Fittest stock to graft his devilish fraud upon. "Imp," of the Saxon *impan*, to put into, to graft upon. Thus children are called little imps, from their imitating all they see and hear.—*Hume.*

By what I seek, but others to make such
As I, though thereby worse to me redound:
For only in destroying I find ease
To my relentless thoughts; and him destroyed,
Or won to what may work his utter loss,
For whom all this was made, all this will soon
Follow, as to him linked in weal or woe;
In woe then; that destruction wide may range:
To me shall be the glory sole among
The infernal powers, in one day to have marred
What he, Almighty styled, six nights and days
Continued making, and who knows how long
Before had been contriving; though perhaps
Not longer than since I in one night freed
From servitude inglorious well nigh half
The angelic name, and thinner left the throng
Of his adorers: he, to be avenged,
And to repair his numbers thus impaired,
Whether such virtue spent of old now failed
More angels to create, if they at least
Are his created, or, to spite us more,
Determined to advance into our room
A creature formed of earth, and him endow,
Exalted from so base original,
With heavenly spoils, our spoils: what he decreed
He effected; man he made, and for him built
Magnificent this world, and earth his seat,
Him lord pronounced, and (oh, indignity!)
Subjected to his service angel-wings,[1]
And flaming ministers to watch and tend
Their earthly charge: of these the vigilance
I dread, and to elude, thus wrapped in mist
Of midnight vapour, glide obscure, and pry
In every bush and brake, where hap may find
The serpent sleeping, in whose mazy folds
To hide me and the dark intent I bring.
Oh, foul descent! that I, who erst contended
With gods to sit the highest, am now constrained
Into a beast, and mixed with bestial slime,
This essence to incarnate and imbrute,
That to the height of deity aspired!

[1] Milton seems to have had the old story of Promethens in mind representing the evil portion of the gods as jealous of the benefit bestowed on mankind.

But what will not ambition and revenge
Descend to? who aspires must down as low
As high he soared, obnoxious first or last
To basest things. Revenge, at first though sweet,
Bitter ere long back on itself recoils:
Let it; I reck not, so it light well aimed,
Since higher I fall short, on him who next
Provokes my envy, this new favourite
Of Heaven, this man of clay, son of despite,
Whom, us the more to spite, his Maker raised
From dust: spite then with spite is best repaid."
So saying, through each thicket dank or dry
Like a black mist low creeping, he held on
His midnight search, where soonest he might find
The serpent: him fast sleeping soon he found
In labyrinth of many a round self-rolled,
His head the midst, well stored with subtle wiles:
Not yet in horrid shade or dismal den,
Nor nocent[1] yet, but on the grassy herb
Fearless, unfeared, he slept: in at his mouth
The devil entered, and his brutal sense,
In heart or head, possessing, soon inspired
With act intelligential; but his sleep
Disturbed not, waiting close the approach of morn.
Now when as sacred light began to dawn
In Eden on the humid flowers, that breathed
Their morning incense, when all things that breathe,
From the earth's great altar send up silent praise
To the Creator, and his nostrils fill
With grateful smell,[2] forth came the human pair,
And joined their vocal worship to the quire
Of creatures wanting voice; that done, partake
The season, prime for sweetest scents[3] and airs:
Then commune how that day they best may ply
Their growing work: for much their work outgrew
The hands' despatch of two gardening so wide.
And Eve first to her husband thus began:
"Adam, well may we labour still to dress
This garden, still to tend plant, herb, and flower,
Our pleasant task enjoined; but, till more hands
Aid us, the work under our labour grows,
Luxurious by restraint; what we by day

[1] Baleful. [2] Cf. Genes. viii. 21.
[3] Scents, so spelt from the Latin *sentire*.

Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind,
One night or two with wanton growth derides,
Tending to wild. Thou, therefore, now advise,
Or bear what to my mind first thoughts present;
Let us divide our labours, thou where choice
Leads thee, or where most needs, whether to wind
The woodbine round this arbour, or direct
The clasping ivy where to climb, while I,
In yonder spring of roses intermixed
With myrtle, find what to redress till noon:
For while so near each other thus all day
Our task we choose, what wonder if so near
Looks intervene and smiles, or object new
Casual discourse draw on, which intermits
Our day's work, brought to little, though begun
Early, and the hour of supper comes unearned?"
To whom mild answer Adam thus returned:
"Sole Eve, associate sole, to me beyond
Compare above all living creatures dear!
Well hast thou motioned, well thy thoughts employed
How we might best fulfil the work which here
God hath assigned us, nor of me shalt pass
Unpraised; for nothing lovelier can be found
In woman, than to study household good,
And good works in her husband to promote.
Yet not so strictly hath our Lord imposed
Labour, as to debar us when we need
Refreshment, whether food, or talk between,
Food of the mind, or this sweet intercourse
Of looks and smiles; for smiles from reason flow,
To brute denied, and are of love the food;
Love, not the lowest end of human life.
For not to irksome toil, but to delight
He made us, and delight to reason joined.
These paths and bowers doubt not but our joint hands
Will keep from wilderness with ease, as wide
As we need walk, till younger hands ere long
Assist us: but if much converse perhaps
Thee satiate, to short absence I could yield;
For solitude sometimes is best society,
And short retirement urges sweet return
But other doubt possesses me, lest harm
Befall thee severed from me; for thou know'st
What hath been warned us, what malicious foe,

Envying our happiness, and of his own
Despairing, seeks to work us woe and shame
By sly assault; and somewhere nigh at hand
Watches, no doubt, with greedy hope to find
His wish and best advantage, us asunder,
Hopeless to circumvent us joined, where each
To other speedy aid might lend at need;
Whether his first design be to withdraw
Our feälty from God, or to disturb
Conjugal love, than which perhaps no bliss
Enjoyed by us excites his envy more;
Or this, or worse, leave not the faithful side
That gave thee being, still shades thee and protects.
The wife, where danger or dishonour lurks,
Safest and seemliest by her husband stays,
Who guards her, or with her the worst endures."
To whom the virgin[1] majesty of Eve,
As one who loves, and some unkindness meets,
With sweet austere composure thus replied:
"Offspring of Heaven and earth, and all earth's lord,
That such an enemy we have, who seeks
Our ruin, both by thee informed I learn,
And from the parting angel overheard,
As in a shady nook I stood behind,
Just then returned at shut of evening flowers.
But that thou shouldst my firmness, therefore, doubt
To God or thee, because we have a foe
May tempt it, I expected not to hear.
His violence thou fear'st not, being such
As we, not capable of death or pain,
Can either not receive, or can repel.
His fraud is then thy fear, which plain infers
Thy equal fear that my firm faith and love
Can by his fraud be shaken or seduced;
Thoughts, which how found they harbour in thy breast,
Adam, misthought of her to thee so dear?[2]
To whom with healing words Adam replied:
"Daughter of God and man,[3] immortal Eve,

[1] Ancient writers used this term with greater latitude than is usual now.

[2] *i. e.* if I am so dear to you as you said (cf. ver. 227), how can you think amiss of me?

[3] As Eve had called Adam "offspring of Heaven and earth," as made by God out of the dust of the earth; so Adam calls Eve

For such thou art, from sin and blame entire:
Not diffident of thee do I dissuade
Thy absence from my sight, but to avoid
The attempt itself, intended by our foe.
For he who tempts, though in vain, at least asperses
The tempted with dishonour foul, supposed
Not incorruptible of faith, not proof
Against temptation: thou thyself with scorn
And anger wouldst resent the offered wrong,
Though ineffectual found: misdeem not, then,
If such affront I labour to avert
From thee alone, which on us both at once
The enemy, though bold, will hardly dare;
Or, daring, first on me the assault shall light.
Nor thou his malice and false guile contemn;
Subtle he needs must be, who could seduce
Angels; nor think superfluous others' aid.
I from the influence of thy looks receive
Access in every virtue; in thy sight
More wise, more watchful, stronger, if need were,
Of outward strength; while shame, thou looking on,
Shame to be overcome or over-reached,
Would utmost vigour raise, and raised unite.
Why should not thou like sense within thee feel
When I am present, and thy trial choose
With me, best witness of thy virtue tried?"
So spake domestic Adam in his care
And matrimonial love, but Eve, who thought
Less attributed to her faith sincere,
Thus her reply with accent sweet renewed:
"If this be our condition, thus to dwell
In narrow circuit straitened by a foe,
Subtle or violent, we not endued
Single with like defence, wherever met,
How are we happy, still in fear of harm?
But harm precedes not sin: only our foe,
Tempting, affronts us with his foul esteem
Of our integrity: his foul esteem
Sticks no dishonour on our front, but turns
Foul on himself; then wherefore shunned or feared

"daughter of God and man," as made by God out of man; and acknowledges her to be "immortal," as she had said herself, ver. 283, that they were "not capable of death or pain;" but only so long as she was "entire from sin and blame."—*Newton.*

By us? who rather double honour gain
From his surmise proved false, find peace within,
Favour from Heaven, our witness from the event.
And what is faith, love, virtue, unassayed
Alone, without exterior help sustained?
Let us not, then, suspect our happy state
Left so imperfect by the Maker wise,
As not secure to single or combined.
Frail is our happiness, if this be so,
And Eden were no Eden thus exposed."
To whom thus Adam fervently replied:
" O woman, best are all things as the will
Of God ordained them; his creating hand
Nothing imperfect or deficient left
Of all that he created, much less man,
Or aught that might his happy state secure,
Secure from outward force; within himself
The danger lies, yet lies within his power:
Against his will he can receive no harm.
But God left free the will, for what obeys
Reason, is free, and reason he made right,
But bid her well be ware, and still erect;
Lest by some fair-appearing good surprised
She dictate false, and misinform the will
To do what God expressly hath forbid.
Not then mistrust, but tender love, enjoins
That I should mind thee oft; and mind thou me.
Firm we subsist, yet possible to swerve,
Since reason not impossibly may meet
Some specious object by the foe suborned,
And fall into deception unaware,
Not keeping strictest watch, as she was warned.
Seek not temptation then, which to avoid
Were better, and most likely, if from me
Thou sever not: trial will come unsought.
Wouldst thou approve thy constancy, approve
First thy obedience; the other who can know,
Not seeing thee attempted, who attest?
But if thou think trial unsought may find
Us both securer than thus warned thou seem'st,
Go; for thy stay, not free, absents thee more;
Go in thy native innocence; rely
On what thou hast of virtue, summon all:
For God towards thee hath done his part: do thine."

So spake the patriarch of mankind; but Eve
Persisted; yet submiss, though last, replied:
"With thy permission, then, and thus forewarned,
Chiefly by what thy own last reasoning words
Touched only, that our trial, when least sought,
May find us both, perhaps, far less prepared,
The willinger I go, nor much expect
A foe so proud will first the weaker seek;
So bent, the more shall shame him his repulse."
Thus saying, from her husband's hand her hand
Soft she withdrew, and, like a wood-nymph light,
Oread or Dryad, or of Delia's train,[1]
Betook her to the groves; but Delia's self
In gait surpassed, and goddess-like deport,
Though not as she with bow and quiver armed,
But with such gardening tools as art yet rude,
Guiltless of fire, had formed, or angels brought.
To Pales,[2] or Pomona, thus adorned,
Likest she seemed; Pomona when she fled
Vertumnus, or to Ceres in her prime,
Yet virgin of Proserpina[3] from Jove.
Her long with ardent look his eye pursued
Delighted, but desiring more her stay.
Oft he to her his charge of quick return
Repeated; she to him as oft engaged
To be returned by noon amid the bower,
And all things in best order to invite
Noontide repast, or afternoon's repose.
O much deceived, much failing, hapless Eve,
Of thy presumed return! event perverse!
Thou never from that hour in Paradise
Found'st either sweet repast, or sound repose;
Such ambush, hid among sweet flowers and shades,
Waited with hellish rancour imminent
To intercept thy way, or send thee back
Despoiled of innocence, of faith, of bliss.
For now, and since first break of dawn, the fiend,
Mere serpent in appearance, forth was come,
And on his quest, where likeliest he might find
The only two of mankind, but in them

[1] Compare the descriptions in Homer, Od. vi. 102, sqq.; Virg. Æn. i. 498, sqq.

[2] The goddess of shepherds.

[3] *i. e.* not yet become the mother of Proserpine.

The whole included race, his purposed prey.
In bower and field he sought, where any tuft
Of grove or garden-plot more pleasant lay,
Their tendance or plantation for delight;
By fountain or by shady rivulet
He sought them both, but wished his hap might find
Eve separate; he wished, but not with hope
Of what so seldom chanced; when to his wish,
Beyond his hope, Eve separate he spies,
Veiled in a cloud of fragrance, where she stood,
Half spied, so thick the roses blushing round
About her glowed, oft stooping to support
Each flower of slender stalk, whose head, though gay
Carnation, purple, azure, or specked with gold,
Hung drooping unsustained; them she upstays
Gently with myrtle band, mindless the while
Herself, though fairest unsupported flower,
From her best prop so far, and storm so nigh.
Nearer he drew, and many a walk traversed
Of stateliest covert, cedar, pine, or palm,
Then voluble and bold, now hid, now seen
Among thick-woven arborets and flowers
Embordered on each bank, the hand of Eve:[1]
Spot more delicious than those gardens feigned
Or of revived Adonis,[2] or renowned
Alcinous, host of old Laërtes' son;

[1] "Embordered on each bank," the banks were bordered with the flowers; "the hand of Eve," the handiwork of Eve, as we say of a picture that it is the hand of such or such a master.

[2] "Of revived Adonis;" for after he was killed by the wild boar, it is said that, at Venus's request, he was restored to life. And we read that his anniversary festival was opened with sorrow and mourning for his death, and concluded with singing and rejoicing for his revival. It is very true, as Bentley says, that "the gardens of Adonis," so frequently mentioned by Greek writers, were nothing but portable earthen pots with some lettuce or fennel growing in them, and thrown away the next day after the yearly festival of Adonis; whence "the gardens of Adonis" grew to be a proverb of contempt for any fruitless, fading, perishable affair. But, as Pearce replies, why did the Grecians on Adonis's festival carry these small earthen gardens about in honour of him? was it not because they had a tradition, that when he was alive he delighted in gardens, and had a magnificent one? Pliny mentions the gardens of "Adonis" and "Alcinous" together as Milton does. There is nothing that the ancients admired more than the gardens of the Hesperides, and those of the kings Adonis and Alcinous.—*Newton.*

Or that, not mystic,[1] where the sapient king[2]
Held dalliance with his fair Egyptian spouse.
Much he the place admired, the person more,
As one who long in populous city pent,
Where houses thick and sewers annoy the air,
Forth issuing on a summer's morn to breathe
Among the pleasant villages and farms
Adjoined, from each thing met conceives delight;
The smell of grain, or tedded[3] grass, or kine,
Or dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound;
If chance with nymph-like step fair virgin pass,
What pleasing seemed, for her now pleases more,
She most, and in her look sums all delight:
Such pleasure took the serpent to behold
This flowery plat, the sweet recess of Eve,
Thus early, thus alone; her heavenly form
Angelic, but more soft and feminine;
Her graceful innocence, her every air
Of gesture, or least action, overawed
His malice, and with rapine sweet bereaved
His fierceness of the fierce intent it brought.
That space the evil one abstracted stood
From his own evil, and for the time remained
Stupidly good, of enmity disarmed,
Of guile, of hate, of envy, of revenge;
But the hot Hell that always in him burns,
Though in mid Heaven, soon ended his delight,
And tortures him now more, the more he sees
Of pleasure not for him ordained: then soon
Fierce hate he recollects, and all his thoughts
Of mischief, gratulating, thus excites:
"Thoughts, whither have ye led me! with what sweet
Compulsion thus transported to forget
What hither brought us! hate, not love; nor hope
Of Paradise for Hell, hope here to taste
Of pleasure; but all pleasure to destroy,
Save what is in destroying; other joy
To me is lost. Then let me not let pass
Occasion which now smiles; behold alone
The woman, opportune to all attempts;
Her husband, for I view far round, not nigh,

[1] *i. e.* not fabulous or allegorical, but real.
[2] Solomon. Cf. Canticles, *passim*.
[3] Mowed and spread out to dry.

Whose higher intellectual more I shun,
And strength, of courage haughty, and of limb
Heroic built, though of terrestrial mould;
Foe not informidable; exempt from wound,
I not; so much hath Hell debased, and pain
Enfeebled me, to what I was in Heaven.
She fair, divinely fair, fit love for gods;
Not terrible, though terror be in love
And beauty, not approached by stronger hate,
Hate stronger, under show of love well feigned,
The way which to her ruin now I tend."
So spake the enemy of mankind enclosed
In serpent, inmate bad! and toward Eve
Addressed his way, not with indented wave,
Prone on the ground, as since, but on his rear,
Circular base of rising folds that towered
Fold above fold, a surging maze, his head
Crested aloft, and carbuncle his eyes;
With burnished neck of verdant gold, erect
Amidst his circling spires, that on the grass
Floated redundant: pleasing was his shape,
And lovely; never since of serpent kind
Lovelier, not those that in Illyria changed
Hermione[1] and Cadmus, or the god
In Epidaurus[2]; nor to which transformed
Ammonian Jove,[3] or Capitoline, was seen;
He with Olympias; this with her who bore
Scipio the height of Rome. With tract oblique
At first, as one who sought access, but feared
To interrupt, sidelong he works his way,
As when a ship by skilful steersman wrought
Nigh river's mouth or foreland, where the wind
Veers oft, as oft so steers, and shifts her sail:
So varied he, and of his tortuous train

[1] Or Harmonia, the wife of Cadmus.

[2] Æsculapius, who is to have taken the form of a serpent when he appeared at Rome during a pestilence.

[3] Jupiter Ammon and Jupiter Capitolinus, the one the Lybian Jupiter, the other the Roman, called "Capitoline," from the Capitol, his temple at Rome. "He with Olympias," the first the pretended father of Alexander the Great, conversing with his mother Olympias in the form of a serpent; "this with her who bore Scipio the height of Rome," the latter fabled in like manner to have been the father of Scipio Africanus, who raised his country and himself to the highest pitch of glory.—*Newton.*

Curled many a wanton wreath in sight of Eve,
To lure her eye; she busied heard the sound
Of rustling leaves, but minded not, as used
To such disport before her through the field,
From every beast, more duteous at her call
Than at Circean call[1] the herd disguised.
He, bolder now, uncalled before her stood,
But as in gaze admiring: oft he bowed
His turret crest, and sleek enamelled neck,
Fawning, and licked the ground whereon she trod.
His gentle dumb expression turned at length
The eye of Eve to mark his play; he, glad
Of her attention gained, with serpent tongue
Organic, or impulse of vocal air,
His fraudulent temptation thus began:
"Wonder not, sovran mistress, if perhaps
Thou canst, who art sole wonder; much less arm
Thy looks, the heaven of mildness, with disdain,
Displeased that I approach thee thus, and gaze
Insatiate, I thus single, nor have feared
Thy awful brow, more awful thus retired.
Fairest resemblance of thy Maker fair,
Thee all things living gaze on, all things thine
By gift, and thy celestial beauty adore
With ravishment beheld, there best beheld
Where universally admired; but here
In this enclosure wild, these beasts among,
Beholders rude, and shallow to discern
Half what in thee is fair, one man except,
Who sees thee? (and what is one?) who shouldst be seen
A goddess among gods, adored and served
By angels numberless, thy daily train."
So glozed the tempter, and his proem tuned;
Into the heart of Eve his words made way,
Though at the voice much marvelling; at length.
Not unamazed, she thus in answer spake:
"What may this mean? language of man pronounced
By tongue of brute, and human sense expressed!
The first, at least, of these I thought denied
To beasts, whom God on their creation-day
Created mute to all articulate sound;

[1] All beasts of the field used to play and sport before her, more obedient to her voice, than men turned into beasts by the famous enchantress Circe, were at her beck. Ovid Metam. xiv. 45.

The latter I demur, for in their looks
Much reason, and in their actions oft appears.
Thee, serpent, subtlest beast of all the field
I knew, but not with human voice endued;
Redouble then this miracle, and say,
How cam'st thou speakable of mute, and how
To me so friendly grown above the rest
Of brutal kind, that daily are in sight:
Say, for such wonder claims attention due."
To whom the guileful tempter thus replied:
" Empress of this fair world, resplendent Eve,
Easy to me it is to tell thee all
What thou command'st, and right thou shou'dst be obeyed
I was at first as other beasts that graze
The trodden herb, of abject thoughts and low,
As was my food; nor aught but food discerned
Or sex, and apprehended nothing high:
Till on a day, roving the field, I chanced
A goodly tree far distant to behold
Loaden with fruit of fairest colours mixed,
Ruddy and gold: I nearer drew to gaze;
When from the boughs a savoury odour blown,
Grateful to appetite, more pleased my sense
Than smell of sweetest fennel, or the teats
Of ewe or goat[1] dropping with milk at even,
Unsucked of lamb or kid, that tend their play
To satisfy the sharp desire I had
Of tasting those fair apples, I resolved
Not to defer; hunger and thirst at once,
Powerful persuaders, quickened at the scent
Of that alluring fruit, urged me so keen.
About the mossy trunk I wound me soon,
For high from ground the branches would require
Thy utmost reach or Adam's: round the tree
All other beasts that saw, with like desire
Longing and envying stood, but could not reach
Amid the tree now got, where plenty hung
Tempting so nigh, to pluck and eat my fill
I spared not; for such pleasure, till that hour,
At feed or fountain never had I found.
Sated at length, ere long I might perceive

[1] Fennel was a favourite food with serpents, who were also supposed to suck the teats of ewes and goats.

Strange alteration in me, to degree
Of reason in my inward powers, and speech
Wanted not long, though to this shape retained.
Thenceforth to speculations high or deep
I turned my thoughts, and with capacious mind
Considered all things visible in Heaven,
Or earth, or middle, all things fair and good;
But all that fair and good in thy divine
Semblance, and in thy beauty's heavenly ray,
United I beheld; no fair to thine
Equivalent or second, which compelled
Me thus, though importune perhaps, to come
And gaze, and worship thee of right declared
Sovran of creatures, universal dame."
So talked the spirited sly snake; and Eve,
Yet more amazed, unwary thus replied:
" Serpent, thy overpraising leaves in doubt
The virtue of that fruit, in thee first proved;
But say, where grows the tree, from hence how far?
For many are the trees of God that grow
In Paradise, and various, yet unknown
To us, in such abundance lies our choice,
As leaves a greater store of fruit untouched,
Still hanging incorruptible, till men
Grow up to their provision, and more hands
Help to disburden nature of her birth."
To whom the wily adder, blithe and glad:
" Empress, the way is ready, and not long;
Beyond a row of myrtles, on a flat,
Fast by a fountain, one small thicket past
Of blowing myrrh and balm: if thou accept
My conduct, I can bring thee thither soon."
" Lead then," said Eve. He, leading, swiftly rolled
In tangles, and made intricate seem straight,
To mischief swift. Hope elevates, and joy
Brightens his crest; as when a wandering fire,
Compact of unctuous vapour, which the night
Condenses, and the cold environs round,
Kindled through agitation to a flame,
Which oft, they say, some evil spirit attends,
Hovering and blazing with delusive light,
Misleads the amazed night-wanderer from his way
To bogs and mires, and oft through pond or pool;
There swallowed up and lost, from succour far.

So glistered the dire snake, and into fraud[1]
Led Eve our credulous mother, to the tree
Of prohibition,[2] root of all our woe;
Which when she saw, thus to her guide she spake:
"Serpent, we might have spared our coming hither,
Fruitless to me, though fruit be here to excess,
The credit of whose virtue rest with thee,
Wondrous indeed, if cause of such effects.
But of this tree we may not taste nor touch,
God so commanded, and left that command
Sole daughter of his voice;[3] the rest, we live
Law to ourselves; our reason is our law."
To whom the tempter guilefully replied:
"Indeed! hath God then said that of the fruit
Of all these garden trees ye shall not eat,
Yet lords declared of all in earth or air?"
To whom thus Eve, yet sinless: "Of the fruit
Of each tree in the garden we may eat,
But of the fruit of this fair tree amidst
The garden, God hath said, 'Ye shall not eat
Thereof, nor shall ye touch it, lest ye die.'"
She scarce had said, though brief, when now more bold
The tempter, but with show of zeal and love
To man, and indignation at his wrong,
New part puts on; and, as to passion moved,
Fluctuates disturbed, yet comely and in act
Raised, as of some great matter to begin
As when of old some orator renowned
In Athens or free Rome, where eloquence
Flourished, since mute, to some great cause addressed,
Stood in himself collected, while each part,
Motion, each act, won audience ere the tongue,
Sometimes in height began, as no delay
Of preface brooking through his zeal of right,
So standing, moving, or to height up-grown,
The tempter, all impassioned, thus began:
"O sacred, wise, and wisdom-giving plant,
Mother of science! now I feel thy power
Within me clear, not only to discern
Things in their causes, but to trace the ways
Of highest agents, deemed however wise.

[1] Harm, damage. [2] An Hebraism for "the forbidden tree."
[3] Also an Hebrew expression, the *bath kol*, signifying any mysterious voice, supposed to proceed from Heaven.

Queen of this universe, do not believe
Those rigid threats of death. Ye shall not die!
How should ye? By the fruit? It gives you life
To knowledge. By the threatener? Look on me,
Me who have touched and tasted, yet both live,
And life more perfect have attained than fate
Meant me, by venturing higher than my lot.
Shall that be shut to man, which to the beast
Is open? or will God incense his ire
For such a petty trespass? and not praise
Rather your dauntless virtue, whom the pain
Of death denounced, whatever thing death be,
Deterred not from achieving what might lead
To happier life, knowledge of good and evil;
Of good, how just? of evil, if what is evil
Be real, why not known, since easier shunned?
God therefore cannot hurt ye, and be just;
Not just, not God; not feared then, nor obeyed:
Your fear itself of death removes the fear.
Why then was this forbid? Why, but to awe?
Why, but to keep ye low and ignorant,
His worshippers? He knows that in the day
Ye eat thereof, your eyes, that seem so clear
Yet are but dim, shall perfectly be then
Opened and cleared, and ye shall be as gods,
Knowing both good and evil as they know.
That ye shall be as gods, since I as man,
Internal man, is but proportion meet:
I of brute human, ye of human gods.
So ye shall die, perhaps, by putting off
Human, to put on gods; death to be wished,
Though threatened, which no worse than this can bring
And what are gods that man may not become
As they, participating godlike food?
The gods are first, and that advantage use
On our belief that all from them proceeds;
I question it; for this fair earth I see,
Warmed by the sun, producing every kind,
Them nothing: if they all things, who enclosed
Knowledge of good and evil in this tree,
That whoso eats thereof forthwith attains
Wisdom without their leave? and wherein lies
The offence, that man should thus attain to know?
What can your knowledge hurt him, or this tree

Impart against his will, if all be his?
Or is it envy? and can envy dwell
In heavenly breasts? These, these and many more
Causes import your need of this fair fruit,
Goddess humane: reach then, and freely taste."
He ended; and his words, replete with guile,
Into her heart too easy entrance won:
Fixed on the fruit she gazed, which to behold
Might tempt alone, and in her ears the sound
Yet rung of his persuasive words impregned
With reason, to her seeming, and with truth;
Meanwhile the hour of noon drew on, and waked
An eager appetite, raised by the smell
So savoury of that fruit, which with desire,
Inclinable now grown to touch or taste,
Solicited her longing eye; yet first
Pausing a while, thus to herself she mused:
"Great are thy virtues, doubtless, best of fruits,
Though kept from man, and worthy to be admired,
Whose taste, too long forborne, at first assay
Gave elocution to the mute, and taught
The tongue not made for speech to speak thy praise.
Thy praise He also who forbids thy use,
Conceals not from us, naming thee the tree
Of knowledge, knowledge both of good and evil,
Forbids us then to taste, but his forbidding
Commends thee more, while it infers the good
By thee communicated, and our want:
For good unknown sure is not had; or, had
And yet unknown, is as not had at all.
In plain, then, what forbids He but to know,
Forbids us good, forbids us to be wise?
Such prohibitions bind not. But if death
Bind us with after-bands, what profits then
Our inward freedom? In the day we eat
Of this fair fruit, our doom is, we shall die.
How dies the serpent? he hath eaten and lives,
And knows, and speaks, and reasons, and discerns,
Irrational till then. For us alone
Was death invented? or to us denied
This intellectual food, for beasts reserved?
For beasts, it seems: yet that one beast which first
Hath tasted, envies not, but brings with joy
The good befallen him, author unsuspect,

Friendly to man, far from deceit or guile.
What fear I, then? rather, what know to fear
Under this ignorance of good and evil,
Of God or death, of law or penalty?
Here grows the cure of all, this fruit divine,
Fair to the eye, inviting to the taste,
Of virtue to make wise: what hinders then
To reach, and feed at once both body and mind?"
So saying, her rash hand in evil hour
Forth reaching to the fruit, she plucked, she ate:
Earth felt the wound, and nature from her seat,
Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe,
That all was lost. Back to the thicket slunk
The guilty serpent; and well might; for Eve,
Intent now wholly on her taste, nought else
Regarded; such delight till then, as seemed,
In fruit she never tasted, whether true
Or fancied so, through expectation high
Of knowledge; nor was godhead from her thought.
Greedily she engorged without restraint,
And knew not eating death; satiate at length,
And heightened as with wine, jocund and boon,
Thus to herself she pleasingly began:
"O sovran, virtuous, precious of all trees
In Paradise! of operation blest
To sapience, hitherto obscured, infamed,
And thy fair fruit let hang, as to no end
Created; but henceforth my early care,
Not without song, each morning, and due praise,
Shall tend thee, and the fertile burden ease
Of thy full branches offered free to all;
Till, dieted by thee, I grow mature
In knowledge, as the gods who all things know;
Though others envy what they cannot give;
For had the gift been theirs, it had not here
Thus grown. Experience, next to thee I owe,
Best guide; not following thee, I had remained
In ignorance; thou open'st wisdom's way,
And giv'st access, though secret she retire.
And I perhaps am secret; Heaven is high,
High, and remote to see from thence distinct
Each thing on earth; and other care perhaps
May have diverted from continual watch
Our great Forbidder, safe with all his spies

About him. But to Adam in what sort
Shall I appear? shall I to him make known
As yet my change, and give him to partake
Full happiness with me, or rather not,
But keep the odds of knowledge in my power
Without co-partner? so to add what wants
In female sex, the more to draw his love,
And render me more equal, and, perhaps,
A thing not undesirable, sometime
Superior; for inferior who is free?
This may be well; but what if God have seen,
And death ensue? then I shall be no more,
And Adam, wedded to another Eve,
Shall live with her enjoying, I extinct·
A death to think! Confirmed then I resolve,
Adam shall share with me in bliss or woe:
So dear I love him, that with him all deaths
I could endure, without him live no life."
So saying, from the tree her step she turned,
But first low reverence done, as to the power
That dwelt within, whose presence had infused
Into the plant sciential sap, derived
From nectar, drink of gods. Adam the while,
Waiting desirous her return, had wove
Of choicest flowers a garland to adorn
Her tresses, and her rural labours crown,
As reapers oft are wont their harvest queen.
Great joy he promised to his thoughts, and new
Solace in her return, so long delayed;
Yet oft his heart, divine[1] of something ill,
Misgave him; he the faltering measure felt;
And forth to meet her went, the way she took
That morn when first they parted; by the tree
Of knowledge he must pass, there he her met,
Scarce from the tree returning; in her hand
A bough of fairest fruit, that downy smiled,
New gathered, and ambrosial smell diffused.
To him she hasted; in her face excuse
Came prologue, and apology too prompt,
Which with bland words at will she thus addressed:
"Hast thou not wondered, Adam, at my stay?
Thee I have missed, and thought it long, deprived
Thy presence; agony of love till now

[1] *i. e.* prescient foreboding.

Not felt, nor shall be twice; for never more
Mean I to try, what rash untried I sought,
The pain of absence from thy sight. But strange
Hath been the cause, and wonderful to hear:
This tree is not, as we are told, a tree
Of danger tasted, nor to evil unknown
Opening the way, but of divine effect
To open eyes, and make them gods who taste;
And hath been tasted such: the serpent wise,
Or not restrained as we, or not obeying,
Hath eaten of the fruit, and is become,
Not dead, as we are threatened, but thenceforth
Endued with human voice and human sense,
Reasoning to admiration; and with me
Persuasively hath so prevailed, that I
Have also tasted, and have also found
The effects to correspond: opener mine eyes,
Dim erst, dilated spirits, ampler heart,
And growing up to godhead, which for thee
Chiefly I sought, without thee can despise.
For bliss, as thou hast part, to me is bliss;
Tedious, unshared with thee, and odious soon
Thou therefore also taste, that equal lot
May join us, equal joy as equal love;
Lest, thou not tasting, different degree
Disjoin us, and I then, too late, renounce
Deity for thee, when fate will not permit."
Thus Eve, with countenance blithe, her story told;
But in her cheek distemper flushing glowed.
On the other side, Adam, soon as he heard
The fatal trespass done by Eve, amazed,
Astonied stood and blank, while horror chill
Ran through his veins, and all his joints relaxed;
From his slack hand the garland wreathed for Eve
Down dropped, and all the faded roses shed.
Speechless he stood and pale, till thus at length
First to himself he inward silence broke:
"O fairest of creation, last and best
Of all God's works, creature in whom excelled
Whatever can to sight or thought be formed,
Holy, divine, good, amiable, or sweet,
How art thou lost! how on a sudden lost,
Defaced, deflowered, and now to death devote!
Rather, how hast thou yielded to transgress

The strict forbiddance, how to violate
The sacred fruit forbidden! Some cursed fraud
Of enemy hath beguiled thee, yet unknown,
And me with thee hath ruined, for with thee
Certain my resolution is to die;
How can I live without thee? how forego
Thy sweet converse and love so dearly joined,
To live again in these wild woods forlorn?
Should God create another Eve, and I
Another rib afford, yet loss of thee
Would never from my heart; no, no! I feel
The link of nature draw me; flesh of flesh,
Bone of my bone thou art, and from thy state
Mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe."
So having said, as one from sad dismay
Recomforted, and after thoughts disturbed
Submitting to what seemed remediless,
Thus in calm mood his words to Eve he turned:
"Bold deed thou hast presumed, adventurous Eve,
And peril great provoked, who thus hast dared,
Had it been only coveting to eye
That sacred fruit, sacred to abstinence;
Much more to taste it under ban to touch.
But past who can recall, or done undo?
Not God omnipotent, nor fate; yet so
Perhaps thou shalt not die, perhaps the fact
Is not so heinous now, foretasted fruit,
Profaned first by the serpent, by him first
Made common and unhallowed ere our taste;
Nor yet on him found deadly; he yet lives;
Lives, as thou saidst, and gains to live, as man,
Higher degree of life: inducement strong
To us, as likely tasting to attain
Proportional ascent, which cannot be
But to be gods, or angels, demi-gods.
Nor can I think that God, Creator wise,
Though threatening, will in earnest so destroy
Us his prime creatures, dignified so high,
Set over all his works, which in our fall,
For us created, needs with us must fail,
Dependent made; so God shall uncreate,
Be frustrate, do, undo, and labour lose:
Not well conceived of God, who, though his power
Creation could repeat, yet would be loth

Us to abolish, lest the adversary
Triumph and say, 'Fickle their state whom God
Most favours; who can please him long? Me first
He ruined, now mankind; whom will he next?'
Matter of scorn, not to be given the foe.
However, I with thee have fixed my lot,
Certain to undergo like doom; if death
Consort with thee, death is to me as life;
So forcible within my heart I feel
The bond of nature draw me to my own,
My own in thee, for what thou art is mine;
Our state cannot be severed; we are one,
One flesh; to lose thee were to lose myself."
So Adam, and thus Eve to him replied:
"O glorious trial of exceeding love,
Illustrious evidence, example high!
Engaging me to emulate; but, short
Of thy perfection, how shall I attain,
Adam, from whose dear side I boast me sprung?
And gladly of our union hear thee speak,
One heart, one soul in both; whereof good proof
This day affords, declaring thee resolved,
Rather than death, or aught than death more dread,
Shall separate us, linked in love so dear,
To undergo with me one guilt, one crime,
If any be, of tasting this fair fruit,
Whose virtue (for of good still good proceeds,
Direct, or by occasion) hath presented
This happy trial of thy love, which else
So eminently never had been known.
Were it I thought death menaced would ensue
This my attempt, I would sustain alone
The worst, and not persuade thee; rather die
Deserted, than oblige thee with a fact
Pernicious to thy peace, chiefly assured,
Remarkably so late of thy so true,
So faithful love unequalled: but I feel
Far otherwise the event; not death, but life
Augmented, opened eyes, new hopes, new joys,
Taste so divine, that what of sweet before
Hath touched my sense, flat seems to this and harsh
On my experience, Adam, freely taste,
And fear of death deliver to the winds"
So saying, she embraced him, and for joy

Tenderly wept; much won, that he his love
Had so ennobled, as of choice to incur
Divine displeasure for her sake, or death.
In recompense (for such compliance bad
Such recompense best merits) from the bough
She gave him of that fair enticing fruit
With liberal hand: he scrupled not to eat,
Against his better knowledge; not deceived,
But fondly overcome with female charm.
Earth trembled from her entrails, as again
In pangs, and nature gave a second groan;
Sky loured; and, muttering thunder, some sad drops
Wept at completing of the mortal sin
Original; while Adam took no thought,
Eating his fill, nor Eve to iterate
Her former trespass feared, the more to soothe
Him with her loved society; that now,
As with new wine intoxicated both,
They swim in mirth, and fancy that they feel
Divinity within them breeding wings
Wherewith to scorn the earth: but that false fruit
Far other operation first displayed,
Carnal desire inflaming; he on Eve
Began to cast lascivious eyes, she him
As wantonly repaid; in lust they burn:
Till Adam thus 'gan Eve to dalliance move:
"Eve, now I see thou art exact of taste,
And elegant, of sapience no small part,
Since to each meaning savour we apply,
And palate call judicious: I the praise
Yield thee, so well this day thou hast purveyed.
Much pleasure we have lost, while we abstained
From this delightful fruit, nor known till now
True relish, tasting; if such pleasure be
In things to us forbidden, it might be wished
For this one tree had been forbidden ten.
But come, so well refreshed, now let us play,
As meet is, after such delicious fare;
For never did thy beauty, since the day
I saw thee first and wedded thee, adorned
With all perfections, so inflame my sense
With ardour to enjoy thee, fairer now
Than ever, bounty of this virtuous tree."
So said he, and forbore not glance or toy

Of amorous intent, well understood
Of Eve, whose eye darted contagious fire.
Her hand he seized, and to a shady bank,
Thick over-head with verdant roof embowered,
He led her nothing loth; flowers were the couch,
Pansies, and violets, and asphodel,
And hyacinth, earth's freshest, softest lap.
There they their fill of love and love's disport
Took largely, of their mutual guilt the seal,
The solace of their sin; till dewy sleep
Oppressed them, wearied with their amorous play.
Soon as the force of that fallacious fruit,
That with exhilarating vapour bland
About their spirits had played, and inmost powers
Made err, was now exhaled; and grosser sleep,
Bred of unkindly fumes, with conscious dreams
Encumbered, now had left them; up they rose
As from unrest, and each the other viewing,
Soon found their eyes how opened, and their minds
How darkened; innocence, that as a veil
Had shadowed them from knowing ill. was gone,
Just confidence, and native righteousness,
And honour from about them, naked left
To guilty shame; he[1] covered, but his robe
Uncovered more. So rose the Danite strong,
Herculean Samson, from the harlot-lap
Of Philistéan Dalilah, and waked
Shorn of his strength; they destitute and bare
Of all their virtue: silent, and in face
Confounded, long they sat, as strucken mute;
Till Adam, though not less than Eve abashed,
At length gave utterance to these words constrained:
" O Eve! in evil hour thou didst give ear
To that false worm, of whomsoever taught
To counterfeit man's voice, true in our fall,
False in our promised rising; since our eyes
Opened we find indeed, and find we know
Both good and evil; good lost, and evil got:
Bad fruit of knowledge, if this be to know,
Which leaves us naked thus, of honour void,
Of innocence, of faith, of purity,
Our wonted ornaments now soiled and stained,
And in our faces evident the signs

[1] *i. e.* shame.

Of foul concupiscence; whence evil store;
Even shame, the last of evils; of the first
Be sure then. How shall I behold the face
Henceforth of God or angel, erst with joy
And rapture so oft beheld? those heavenly shapes
Will dazzle now this earthly with their blaze
Insufferably bright. Oh! might I here
In solitude live savage, in some glade
Obscured, where highest woods, impenetrable
To star or sunlight, spread their umbrage[1] broad
And brown as evening: cover me, ye pines!
Ye cedars, with innumerable boughs
Hide me, where I may never see them more!
But let us now, as in bad plight, devise
What best may for the present serve to hide
The parts of each from other, that seem most
To shame obnoxious, and unseemliest seen;
Some tree, whose broad smooth leaves together sewed,
And girded on our loins, may cover round
Those middle parts, that this new comer, shame,
There sit not, and reproach us as unclean."
So counselled he, and both together went
Into the thickest wood; there soon they chose
The fig-tree, not that kind for fruit renowned,
But such as at this day to Indians known
In Malabar or Deccan spreads her arms
Branching so broad and long, that in the ground
The bended twigs take root, and daughters grow
About the mother tree, a pillared shade
High overarched, and echoing walks between;
There oft the Indian herdsman, shunning heat,
Shelters in cool, and tends his pasturing herds
At loopholes cut through thickest shade: those leaves
They gathered, broad as Amazonian targe,
And, with what skill they had, together sewed,
To gird their waist: vain covering, if to hide
Their guilt and dreaded shame! Oh, how unlike
To that first naked glory! Such of late
Columbus found the American, so girt
With feathered cincture, naked else and wild
Among the trees on isles and woody shores.
Thus fenced, and as they thought, their shame in part
Covered, but not at rest or ease of mind,

[1] Shadow.

They sat them down to weep; nor only tears
Rained at their eyes, but high winds worse within
Began to rise, high passions, anger, hate,
Mistrust, suspicion, discord; and shook sore
Their inward state of mind, calm region once
And full of peace, now tossed and turbulent;
For understanding ruled not, and the will
Heard not her lore, both in subjection now
To sensual appetite, who from beneath
Usurping over sovran reason claimed
Superior sway. From thus distempered breast,
Adam, estranged in look and altered style,
Speech intermitted thus to Eve renewed:
"Would thou hadst hearkened to my words, and stayed
With me, as I besought thee, when that strange
Desire of wandering, this unhappy morn,
I know not whence possessed thee; we had then
Remained still happy, not as now, despoiled
Of all our good, shamed, naked, miserable.
Let none henceforth seek needless cause to approve
The faith they owe; when earnestly they seek
Such proof, conclude, they then begin to fail."
To whom, soon moved with touch of blame, thus Eve:
"What words have passed thy lips? Adam severe,
Imput'st thou that to my default, or will
Of wandering, as thou call'st it, which, who knows
But might as ill have happened thou being by,
Or to thyself, perhaps? Hadst thou been there,
Or here the attempt, thou couldst not have discerned
Fraud in the serpent, speaking as he spake;
No ground of enmity between us known,
Why he should mean me ill, or seek to harm?
Was I to have never parted from thy side?
As good have grown there still a lifeless rib.
Being as I am, why didst not thou, the head,
Command me absolutely not to go,
Going into such danger as thou saidst?
Too facile then, thou didst not much gainsay,
Nay, didst permit, approve, and fair dismiss.
Hadst thou been firm and fixed in thy dissent,
Neither had I transgressed, nor thou with me."
To whom, then first incensed, Adam replied:
"Is this the love, is this the recompense
Of mine to thee, ingrateful Eve! expressed

Immutable when thou wert lost, not I,
Who might have lived and joyed immortal bliss,
Yet willingly chose rather death with thee?
And am I now upbraided as the cause
Of thy transgressing? Not enough severe,
It seems, in thy restraint: what could I more?
I warned thee, I admonished thee, foretold
The danger, and the lurking enemy
That lay in wait; beyond this had been force,
And force upon free will hath here no place.
But confidence then bore thee on, secure
Either to meet no danger, or to find
Matter of glorious trial; and perhaps
I also erred in overmuch admiring
What seemed in thee so perfect, that I thought
No evil durst attempt thee; but I rue
That error now, which is become my crime,
And thou the accuser. Thus it shall befall
Him who, to worth in woman overtrusting,
Lets her will rule; restraint she will not brook;
And, left to herself, if evil thence ensue,
She first his weak indulgence will accuse."
Thus they in mutual accusation spent
The fruitless hours, but neither self condemning
And of their vain contést appeared no end.

END OF THE NINTH BOOK.

BOOK X.

THE ARGUMENT.

Man's transgression known, the guardian angels forsake Paradise, and return up to Heaven to approve their vigilance, and are approved; God declaring that the entrance of Satan could not by them be prevented. He sends his Son to judge the transgressors, who descends, and gives sentence accordingly; then in pity clothes them both, and reascends. Sin and Death, sitting till then at the gates of Hell, by wondrous sympathy feeling the success of Satan in this new world, and the sin by man there committed, resolve to sit no longer confined in Hell, but to follow Satan, their sire, unto the place of man. To make the way easier from Hell to this world, to and fro, they pave a broad highway or bridge over Chaos, according to the track that Satan first made; then preparing for earth, they meet him, proud of his success, returning to Hell; their mutual gratulation. Satan arrives at Pandemonium; in full assembly relates with boasting his success against man; instead of applause is treated with a general hiss by all his audience, transformed with himself also suddenly into serpents, according to his doom given in Paradise; then deluded with a show of the forbidden tree springing up before them, they, greedily reaching to take of the fruits, chew dust and bitter ashes. The proceedings of Sin and Death; God foretells the final victory of his Son over them, and the renewing of all things; but for the present commands his angels to make several alterations in the heavens and elements. Adam more and more perceiving his fallen condition, heavily bewails, rejects the condolement of Eve; she persists, and at length appeases him; then, to evade the curse likely to fall on their offspring, proposes to Adam violent ways, which he approves not, but, conceiving better hope, puts her in mind of the late promise made them, that her seed should be revenged on the serpent, and exhorts her with him to seek peace of the offended Deity, by repentance and supplication.

MEANWHILE the heinous and despiteful act
Of Satan done in Paradise, and how
He, in the serpent, had perverted Eve,
Her husband she, to taste the fatal fruit,
Was known in Heaven; for what can 'scape the eye

Of God all-seeing, or deceive his heart
Omniscient? who, in all things wise and just,
Hindered not Satan to attempt the mind
Of man, with strength entire, and free-will armed,
Complete to have discovered and repulsed
Whatever wiles of foe or seeming friend.
For still they knew, and ought to have still remembered
The high injunction not to taste that fruit,
Whoever tempted; which they not obeying,
Incurred (what could they less?) the penalty,
And, manifold in sin, deserved to fall.
Up into Heaven from Paradise in haste
The angelic guards ascended, mute and sad
For man, for of his state by this they knew,
Much wondering how the subtle fiend had stolen
Entrance unseen. Soon as the unwelcome news
From earth arrived at Heaven-gate, displeased
All were who heard; dim sadness did not spare
That time celestial visages, yet, mixed
With pity, violated not their bliss.
About the new-arrived, in multitudes
The ethereal people ran, to hear and know
How all befell: they towards the throne supreme
Accountable made haste to make appear
With righteous plea their utmost vigilance,
And easily approved; when the Most High,
Eternal Father, from his secret cloud,
Amidst in thunder uttered thus his voice:
"Assembled angels, and ye powers returned
From unsuccessful charge, be not dismayed
Nor troubled at these tidings from the earth,
Which your sincerest care could not prevent,
Foretold so lately what would come to pass,
When first this tempter crossed the gulf from Hell
I told ye then[1] he should prevail and speed
On his bad errand, man should be seduced
And flattered out of all, believing lies
Against his Maker; no decree of mine
Concurring to necessitate his fall,
Or touch with lightest moment of impulse
His free will, to her own inclining left
In even scale. But fallen he is, and now
What rests, but that the mortal sentence pass

[1] See iii. 80—96.

On his transgression, death denounced that day?
Which he presumes already vain and void,
Because not yet inflicted, as he feared,
By some immediate stroke; but soon shall find
Forbearance no acquittance[1] ere day end.
Justice shall not return as bounty scorned.
But whom send I to judge them? whom but thee,
Vicegerent Son? To thee I have transferred
All judgment[2] whether in Heaven, or Earth, or Hell
Easy it may be seen that I intend
Mercy colleague with justice, sending thee
Man's friend, his Mediator, his designed
Both ransom and Redeemer voluntary,
And destined man himself to judge man fallen."
So spake the Father, and unfolding bright
Toward the right hand his glory, on the Son
Blazed forth unclouded Deity; he full
Resplendent all his Father manifest
Expressed, and thus divinely answered mild:
"Father eternal, thine is to decree,
Mine both in Heaven and earth to do thy will
Supreme, that thou in me thy Son beloved
Mayst ever rest well pleased. I go to judge
On earth these thy transgressors; but thou know'st,
Whoever judged, the worst on me must light,
When time shall be, for so I undertook[3]
Before thee; and not repenting, this obtain
Of right, that I may mitigate their doom
On me derived; yet I shall temper so
Justice with mercy, as may illustrate most
Them fully satisfied, and thee appease.
Attendance none shall need, nor train, where none
Are to behold the judgment, but the judged,
Those two; the third best absent is condemned,
Convict by flight, and rebel to all law:
Conviction to the serpent none belongs."
Thus saying, from his radiant seat he rose
Of high collateral[4] glory: him thrones and powers,

[1] Compare the words of Sir Thomas More to his daughter, when congratulating him on his escape: "In faith, Meg, what is put off is not given up—*quod differtus, non aufertur*"—Gallery of Portraits, v. ii. p. 163.

[2] John, v. 22.

[3] See iii. 236, sq.

[4] He uses "collateral," as he does most other words, in a sense agreeable to the etymology, side by side. The Son sat at the right

Princedoms, and dominations ministrant,
Accompanied to Heaven-gate, from whence
Eden and all the coast in prospect lay.
Down he descended straight; the speed of gods
Time counts not, though with swiftest minutes winged.
Now was the sun in western cadence low
From noon, and gentle airs, due at their hour,
To fan the earth now waked, and usher in
The evening cool, when he, from wrath more cool,
Came the mild Judge and Intercessor both,
To sentence man: the voice of God they heard
Now walking in the garden, by soft winds
Brought to their ears, while day declined; they heard,
And from his presence hid themselves among
The thickest trees, both man and wife; till God,
Approaching, thus to Adam called aloud:
"Where art thou, Adam, wont with joy to meet
My coming seen far off? I miss thee here,
Not pleased, thus entertained with solitude,
Where obvious duty erewhile appeared unsought:
Or come I less conspicuous, or what change
Absents thee, or what chance detains? Come forth!"
He came, and with him Eve, more loth, though first
To offend; discountenanced both, and discomposed;
Love was not in their looks, either to God
Or to each other, but apparent guilt,
And shame, and perturbation, and despair,
Anger and obstinacy, and hate and guile.
Whence Adam, faltering long, thus answered brief:
"I heard thee in the garden, and of thy voice
Afraid, being naked, hid myself." To whom
The gracious Judge without revile replied:
"My voice thou oft hast heard, and hast not feared,
But still rejoiced; how is it now become
So dreadful to thee? That thou art naked, who
Hath told thee? Hast thou eaten of the tree
Whereof I gave thee charge thou shouldst not eat?"
To whom thus Adam, sore beset, replied:
"O Heaven! in evil strait this day I stand

hand of the Father; and rising from thence, he may properly be said to rise "from his seat of high collateral glory," or, as it is elsewhere expressed, vi. 747, "from the right hand of glory where he sat." The word was used before, in viii. 426—

"Collateral love and dearest amity." *Newton.*

Before my Judge, either to undergo
Myself the total crime, or to accuse
My other self, the partner of my life;
Whose failing, while her faith to me remains,
I should conceal, and not expose to blame
By my complaint; but strict necessity
Subdues me, and calamitous constraint,
Lest on my head both sin and punishment,
However insupportable, be all
Devolved; though should I hold my peace, yet thou
Wouldst easily detect what I conceal.
This woman, whom thou mad'st to be my help,
And giv'st me as thy perfect gift so good,
So fit, so acceptable, so divine,
That from her hand I could suspect no ill,
And what she did, whatever in itself,
Her doing seemed to justify the deed:
She gave me of the tree, and I did eat."
To whom the sovran Presence thus replied:
"Was she thy God, that her thou didst obey
Before his voice? or was she made thy guide,
Superior, or but equal, that to her
Thou didst resign thy manhood, and the place
Wherein God set thee above her made of thee,
And for thee, whose perfection far excelled
Hers in all real dignity? Adorned
She was indeed, and lovely to attract
Thy love, not thy subjection; and her gifts
Were such as under government well seemed;
Unseemly to bear rule, which was thy part
And person,[1] hadst thou known thyself aright."
So having said, he thus to Eve in few:
"Say, woman, what is this which thou hast done?"
To whom sad Eve, with shame nigh overwhelmed,
Confessing soon, yet not before her Judge
Bold or loquacious, thus abashed replied:
"The serpent me beguiled, and I did eat."
Which when the Lord God heard, without delay
To judgment he proceeded on the accused
Serpent, though brute, unable to transfer
The guilt on him who made him instrument

[1] A Latinism, meaning the *persona dramatis*, the part or character sustained. So in his History of England, p. 37: "If it were an honour to that *person* which he sustained."—*Richardson.*

Of mischief, and polluted from the end
Of his creation, justly then accursed,
As vitiated in nature: more to know
Concerned not man (since he no further knew),[1]
Nor altered his offence; yet God at last
To Satan, first in sin, his doom applied,
Though in mysterious terms, judged as then best;
And on the serpent thus his curse let fall:
"Because thou hast done this, thou art accursed
Above all cattle, each beast of the field;
Upon thy belly grovelling thou shalt go,
And dust shalt eat all the days of thy life.
Between thee and the woman I will put
Enmity, and between thine and her seed;
Her seed shall bruise thy head, thou bruise his heel."
So spake this oracle, then verified
When Jesus, son of Mary, second Eve,
Saw Satan fall like lightning down from Heaven,
Prince of the air; then rising from his grave,
Spoiled principalities and powers, triumphed
In open show, and with ascension bright
Captivity led captive through the air,
The realm itself of Satan long usurped,
Whom he shall tread at last under our feet;
Even he, who now foretold his fatal bruise;
And to the woman thus his sentence turned:
"Thy sorrow I will greatly multiply
By thy conception; children thou shalt bring
In sorrow forth; and to thy husband's will
Thine shall submit: he over thee shall rule."
On Adam last thus judgment he pronounced:
"Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife,
And eaten of the tree concerning which
I charged thee, saying, 'Thou shalt not eat thereof,'
Cursed is the ground for thy sake: thou in sorrow
Shalt eat thereof all the days of thy life;

[1] This is badly expressed. The meaning is, as man was not to be let into the mystery of the redemption at this time, it did not concern him to know that the serpent was but the instrument of the devil. When Milton wrote this, I fancy he had it not then in his thoughts to make Michael reveal to Adam, in the last book, the doctrine of redemption; or, if he did intend it, he forgot that a theological comment on those words in Genesis would ill agree with what was to follow.—*Warburton.*

Thorns also, and thistles, it shall bring thee forth
Unbid; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;
In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread,
Till thou return unto the ground; for thou
Out of the ground wast taken, know thy birth,
For dust thou art, and shalt to dust return."
So judged he man, both Judge and Saviour sent;
And the instant stroke of death, denounced that day,
Removed far off; then pitying how they stood
Before him naked to the air, that now
Must suffer change, disdained not to begin
Thenceforth the form of servant to assume,
As when he washed his servants' feet;[1] so now,
As father of his family, he clad
Their nakedness with skins of beasts, or slain,
Or as the snake with youthful coat repaid;[2]
And thought not much to clothe his enemies:
Nor he their outward only with the skins
Of beasts; but inward nakedness, much more
Opprobrious, with his robe of righteousness[3]
Arraying, covered from his Father's sight.
To him with swift ascent he up returned,
Into his blissful bosom reassumed
In glory as of old; to him appeased.
All, though all-knowing, what had passed with man
Recounted, mixing intercession sweet.
Meanwhile, ere thus was sinned and judged on earth,
Within the gates of Hell sat Sin and Death,
In counterview within the gates, that now
Stood open wide, belching outrageous flame
Far into Chaos, since the Fiend passed through,
Sin opening; who thus now to Death began.
"O son, why sit we here each other viewing
Idly, while Satan our great author thrives
In other worlds, and happier seat provides
For us his offspring dear? It cannot be
But that success attends him; if mishap,
Ere this he had returned, with fury driven
By his avengers, since no place like this
Can fit his punishment, or their revenge.
Methinks I feel new strength within me rise,
Wings growing, and dominion given me large

[1] John xiii. [2] This idea is rather pedantic and whimsical.
[3] Isa. lxi. 10.

Beyond this deep; whatever draws me on,
Or sympathy, or some connatural force,
Powerful at greatest distance to unite
With secret amity things of like kind
By secretest conveyance. Thou, my shade[1]
Inseparable, must with me along;
For Death from Sin no power can separate.
But lest the difficulty of passing back
Stay his return perhaps over this gulf
Impassable, impervious, let us try
Adventurous work, yet to thy power and mine
Not unagreeable, to found a path
Over this main from Hell to that new world
Where Satan now prevails; a monument
Of merit high to all the infernal host,
Easing their passage hence, for intercourse,
Or transmigration, as their lot shall lead.
Nor can I miss the way, so strongly drawn
By this new-felt attraction and instinct."
Whom thus the meagre shadow answered soon:
"Go whither fate and inclination strong
Lead thee; I shall not lag behind, nor err[2]
The way, thou leading; such a scent I draw
Of carnage, prey innumerable, and taste
The savour of death from all things there that live:
Nor shall I to the work thou enterprisest
Be wanting, but afford thee equal aid."
So saying, with delight he snuffed the smell
Of mortal change on earth. As when a flock
Of ravenous fowl, though many a league remote,
Against the day of battle, to a field
Where armies lie encamped, come flying, lured
With scent of living carcasses designed
For death, the following day, in bloody fight:
So scented the grim feature, and upturned
His nostril wide into the murky air,
Sagacious of his quarry from so far.
Then both from out Hell-gates into the waste
Wide anarchy of Chaos, damp and dark,
Flew diverse; and with power (their power was great)

[1] So Shakspeare, 2 Henry IV. act ii.:—

"I am your *shadow*, my lord, I'll follow you."

[2] Mistake.

Hovering upon the waters, what they met
Solid or flimsy, as in raging sea
Tossed up and down together, crowded drove
From each side shoaling towards the mouth of Hell:
As when two polar winds, blowing adverse
Upon the Cronian sea,[1] together drive
Mountains of ice, that stop the imagined way
Beyond Petsora eastward, to the rich
Cathaian coast. The aggregated soil
Death, with his mace petrific, cold and dry,
As with a trident smote, and fixed as firm
As Delos floating once; the rest his look
Bound with Gorgonian rigour not to move;
And with asphaltic slime, broad as the gate,
Deep to the roots of Hell the gathered beach
They fastened, and the mole immense wrought on
Over the foaming deep high arched, a bridge
Of length prodigious, joining to the wall
Immoveable of this now senseless world
Forfeit to Death; from hence a passage broad,
Smooth, easy, inoffensive, down to Hell.
So, if great things to small may be compared,
Xerxes, the liberty of Greece to yoke,
From Susa, his Memnonian palace high,
Came to the sea, and, over Hellespont
Bridging his way, Europe with Asia joined,
And scourged with many a stroke the indignant waves.
Now had they brought the work by wondrous art
Pontifical,[2] a ridge of pendent rock,
Over the vexed abyss, following the track
Of Satan to the self-same place where he
First lighted from his wing, and landed safe
From out of Chaos, to the outside bare
Of this round world: with pins of adamant

[1] The northern frozen sea ("A Thule unius diei navigatione mare *concretum*, a nonnullis *Cronium* appellatur. Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. 4, cap. 16), and "driving together mountains of ice, that stop the imagined way," the north-east passage, as it is called, which so many have attempted to discover; "beyond Petsora eastward," the most north-eastern province of Muscovy, "to the rich Cathaian coast," Cathay or Catay, a country of Asia, and the northern part of China. —*Newton*.

[2] So called from the "pontifices," who derived their name among the Romans from the wicker bridges (*pons*), of which they superintended the construction.

And chains they made all fast, too fast they made
And durable; and now in little space
The confines met of empyréan Heaven,
And of this world; and, on the left hand, Hell
With long reach interposed: three several ways
In sight, to each of these three places led.
And now their way to earth they had descried,
To Paradise first tending, when behold
Satan, in likeness of an angel bright,
Betwixt the Centaur and the Scorpion[1] steering
His zenith, while the sun in Aries rose:
Disguised he came, but those his children dear
Their parent soon discerned, though in disguise.
He, after Eve seduced, unminded slunk
Into the wood fast by; and, changing shape
To observe the sequel, saw his guileful act
By Eve, though all unweeting, seconded
Upon her husband, saw their shame that sought
Vain covertures; but when he saw descend
The Son of God to judge them, terrified
He fled, not hoping to escape, but shun
The present, fearing guilty what his wrath
Might suddenly inflict; that past, returned
By night, and listening where the hapless pair
Sat in their sad discourse, and various plaint,
Thence gathered his own doom, which understood
Not instant, but of future time, with joy
And tidings fraught, to Hell he now returned;
And at the brink of Chaos, near the foot
Of this new wondrous pontifice, unhoped
Met who to meet him came, his offspring dear.
Great joy was at their meeting, and at sight
Of that stupendous bridge his joy increased.
Long he admiring stood, till Sin, his fair
Enchanting daughter, thus the silence broke:
"O parent, these are thy magnific deeds,
Thy trophies, which thou view'st as not thine own:
Thou art their author and prime architect:
For I no sooner in my heart divined,
My heart, which by a secret harmony
Still moves with thine, joined in connection sweet,
That thou on earth hadst prospered, which thy looks

[1] As these constellations lay in quite a different part of the heavens from Aries, Satan thereby hoped to elude discovery.

Now also evidence, but straight I felt,
Though distant from thee worlds between, yet felt
That I must after thee with this thy son,
Such fatal consequence unites us three:
Hell could no longer hold us in her bounds,
Nor this unvoyageable gulf obscure
Detain from following thy illustrious track.
Thou hast achieved our liberty, confined
Within Hell-gates till now, thou us empowered
To fortify thus far, and overlay
With this portentous bridge the dark abyss.
Thine now is all this world; thy virtue hath won
What thy hands builded not, thy wisdom gained
With odds what war hath lost, and fully avenged
Our foil in Heaven; here thou shalt monarch reign,
There didst not; there let him still victor sway,
As battle hath adjudged, from this new world
Retiring, by his own doom alienated;
And henceforth monarchy with thee divide,
Of all things parted by the empyreal bounds,
His quadrature,[1] from thy orbicular world,
Or try thee now more dangerous to his throne."
Whom thus the prince of darkness answered glad:
"Fair daughter, and thou son and grandchild both,
High proof ye now have given to be the race
Of Satan (for I glory in the name,
Antagonist of Heaven's almighty King);
Amply have merited of me, of all
The infernal empire, that so near Heaven's door
Triumphal with triumphal act have met,
Mine, with this glorious work, and made one realm
Hell and this world, one realm, one continent
Of easy thoroughfare. Therefore, while I
Descend through darkness, on your road with ease,
To my associate powers, them to acquaint
With these successes, and with them rejoice;
You two this way, among these numerous orbs
All yours, right down to Paradise descend;
There dwell and reign in bliss, thence on the earth

[1] Milton here follows the opinion of Gassendus and others, who say that the empyréum, or heaven of heavens, is a square figure, because the holy city in the Revelation is so described, Rev. xxi. 16: "And the city lieth four-square, and the length is as large as the breadth."—*Newton.*

Dominion exercise, and in the air,
Chiefly on man, sole lord of all declared;
Him first make sure your thrall, and lastly kill.
My substitutes I send ye, and create
Plenipotent on earth, of matchless might
Issuing from me: on your joint vigour now
My hold of this new kingdom all depends,
Through Sin to Death exposed by my exploit.
If your joint power prevail, the affairs of Hell
No detriment need fear; go, and be strong."
So saying, he dismissed them; they with speed
Their course through thickest constellations held,
Spreading their bane; the blasted stars looked wan,
And planets, planet-struck, real eclipse
Then suffered. The other way Satan went down
The causey to Hell gate; on either side
Disparted Chaos, over built, exclaimed,
And with rebounding surge the bars assailed,
That scorned his indignation; through the gate,
Wide open and unguarded, Satan passed,
And all about found desolate; for those
Appointed to sit there, had left their charge,
Flown to the upper world; the rest were all
Far to the inland retired, about the walls
Of Pandemonium, city and proud seat
Of Lucifer, so by allusion called,
Of that bright star to Satan paragoned.[1]
There kept their watch the legions, while the grand
In council sat, solicitous what chance
Might intercept their emperor sent; so he,
Departing, gave command, and they observed.
As when the Tartar[2] from his Russian foe,
By Astracan, over the snowy plains
Retires; or Bactrian Sophi, from the horns
Of Turkish crescent, leaves all waste beyond

[1] Equal, like unto.

[2] As when the Tartar retreats from his Muscovite enemy, "over the snowy plains by Astracan," a considerable part of the Czar's dominion, formerly a Tartarian kingdom, with a capital city of the same name, near the mouth of the river Volga, at its fall into the Caspian sea; "or Bactrian Sophi," or the Persian Emperor, named Bactrian of Bactria, one of the greatest and richest provinces of Persia, lying near the Caspian sea; "from the horns of Turkish crescent," from his Turkish enemies, who bear the horned moon, the crescent, on their ensigns; "leaves all waste beyond the realm of

The realm of Aladule, in his retreat
To Tauris or Casbeen: so these, the late
Heaven-banished host, left desert utmost Hell
Many a dark league, reduced in careful watch
Round their metropolis, and now expecting
Each hour their great adventurer from the search
Of foreign worlds; he through the midst unmarked,
In show plebeian angel militant
Of lowest order, passed; and from the door
Of that Plutonian hall, invisible
Ascended his high throne, which, under state
Of richest texture spread, at the upper end
Was placed in regal lustre. Down a while
He sat, and round about him saw unseen:
At last, as from a cloud, his fulgent head
And shape star-bright appeared, or brighter, clad
With what permissive glory since his fall
Was left him, or false glitter: all amazed
At that so sudden blaze the Stygian throng
Bent their aspect, and whom they wished beheld,
Their mighty chief returned: loud was the acclaim:
Forth rush in haste the great consulting peers,
Raised from their dark divan, and with like joy
Congratulant approached him, who with hand
Silence, and with these words attention, won:
"Thrones, dominations, princedoms, virtues, powers,
For in possession such, not only of right,
I call ye and declare ye now; returned
Successful beyond hope, to lead ye forth
Triumphant out of this infernal pit
Abominable, accursed, the house of woe,
And dungeon of our tyrant: now possess,
As lords, a spacious world, to our native Heaven
Little inferior, by my adventure hard
With peril great achieved. Long were to tell
What I have done, what suffered, with what pain

Aladule," the greater Armenia, called by the Turks (under whom the greatest part of it is) Aladule, of its last king Aladules, slain by Selymus the First; "in his retreat to Tauris," a great city in the kingdom of Persia, now called Ecbatana, sometimes in the hands of the Turks, but in 1603 retaken by Abas, king of Persia; "or Casbeen," one of the greatest cities of Persia, in the province of Ayrach, formerly Parthia, towards the Caspian sea, where the Persian monarchs made their residence after the loss of Tauris, from which it is distant sixty-five German miles to the south-east.—*Hume.*

Voyaged the unreal, vast, unbounded deep
Of horrible confusion, over which
By Sin and Death a broad way now is paved
To expedite your glorious march; but I
Toiled out my uncouth[1] passage, forced to ride
The untractable abyss, plunged in the womb
Of unoriginal night and Chaos wild,
That, jealous of their secrets, fiercely opposed
My journey strange, with clamorous uproar
Protesting[2] Fate supreme; thence how I found
The new-created world, which fame in Heaven
Long had foretold, a fabric wonderful
Of absolute perfection, therein man
Placed in a Paradise, by our exile
Made happy: him by fraud I have seduced
From his Creator, and the more to increase
Your wonder, with an apple; He, thereat
Offended (worth your laughter), hath given up
Both his beloved man and all his world,
To Sin and Death a prey, and so to us,
Without our hazard, labour, or alarm,
To range in, and to dwell, and over man
To rule, as over all he should have ruled.
True is, me also he hath judged, or rather
Me not, but the brute serpent in whose shape
Man I deceived: that which to me belongs,
Is enmity, which he will put between
Me and mankind; I am to bruise his heel;
His seed (when, is not set) shall bruise my head:
A world who would not purchase with a bruise,
Or much more grievous pain? Ye have the account
Of my performance: what remains, ye gods,
But up and enter now into full bliss?"
So having said, a while he stood, expecting
Their universal shout and high applause
To fill his ear; when, contrary, he hears
On all sides, from innumerable tongues,
A dismal universal hiss, the sound
Of public scorn: he wondered, but not long
Had leisure, wondering at himself now more;
His visage drawn he felt to sharp and spare,
His arms clung to his ribs, his legs intwining

[1] Strange, unusual. [2] Calling upon Fate as a witness.

Each other, till supplanted[1] down he fell
A monstrous serpent on his belly prone,
Reluctant, but in vain; a greater power
Now ruled him, punished in the shape he sinned,
According to his doom: he would have spoke,
But hiss for hiss returned with forkéd tongue
To forkéd tongue, for now were all transformed
Alike, to serpents all, as accessories
To his bold riot: dreadful was the din
Of hissing through the hall, thick swarming now
With complicated monsters head and tail,
Scorpion, and asp, and amphisbæna[2] dire,
Cerastes horned, hydrus,[3] and elops[4] drear,
And dipsas[5] (not so thick swarmed once the soil[6]
Bedropped with blood of Gorgon, or the isle
Ophiusa[7]); but still greatest he the midst,
Now dragon grown, larger than whom the sun
Engendered in the Pythian vale on slime,
Huge Python, and his power no less he seemed
Above the rest still to retain; they all
Him followed, issuing forth to the open field,
Where all yet left of that revolted rout,
Heaven-fallen, in station stood or just array,
Sublime with expectation, when to see
In triumph issuing forth their glorious chief;
They saw, but other sight instead! a crowd
Of ugly serpents: horror on them fell,
And horrid sympathy; for what they saw,
They felt themselves now changing; down their arms,
Down fell both spear and shield, down they as fast,
And the dire hiss renewed, and the dire form
Catched by contagion, like in punishment,
As in their crime. Thus was the applause they meant

[1] *i. e.* literally, "tripped up," from *supplanto*. There is much force in this expression, denoting the physical as well as moral degradation of the fiend.

[2] A monster, said to have a head at both ends.

[3] A water serpent.

[4] A dumb serpent, which gives us warning of its approach, as other serpents do, by hissing. There is, however, some incongruity in the passage.—*See Bentley and Pearce.*

[5] So called from the frightful *thirst* induced by its bite.

[6] Libya, cf. Ovid, Met. iv. 616; Lucan, ix. 6 '6.

[7] A small island in the Mediterranean, deriving its name from the numerous serpents (ὄφεις) with which it was infested.

Turned to exploding hiss, triumph to shame
Cast on themselves from their own mouths. There stood
A grove hard by, sprung up with this their change,
His will who reigns above, to aggravate
Their penance, laden with fair fruit, like that
Which grew in Paradise, the bait of Eve
Used by the tempter: on that prospect strange
Their earnest eyes they fixed, imagining
For one forbidden tree a multitude
Now risen, to work them further woe or shame;
Yet, parched with scalding thirst and hunger fierce,
Though to delude them sent, could not abstain,
But on they rolled in heaps, and up the trees
Climbing, sat thicker than the snaky locks
That curled Megæra:[1] greedily they plucked
The fruitage fair to sight, like that which grew
Near that bituminous lake[2] where Sodom flamed;
This, more delusive, not the touch but taste
Deceived; they, fondly thinking to allay
Their appetite with gust, instead of fruit
Chewed bitter ashes, which the offended taste
With spattering noise rejected: oft they assayed
Hunger and thirst constraining; drugged as oft,
With hatefullest disrelish writhed their jaws
With soot and cinders filled; so oft they fell
Into the same illusion, not as man [plagued
Whom they triumphed once lapsed.[3] Thus were they
And worn with famine, long and ceaseless hiss,
Till their lost shape, permitted, they resumed;
Yearly enjoined, some say, to undergo
This annual humbling certain numbered days,
To dash their pride, and joy for man seduced.
However, some tradition they dispersed
Among the heathen of their purchase got,
And fabled how the serpent, whom they called
Ophion, with Eurynome, the wide

[1] One of the furies.

[2] The lake Asphaltites, near which Sodom and Gomorrah were situated. Josephus affirms, the shapes and fashions of them and three other cities, called the cities of the plain, were to be seen in his days, and trees loaden with fair fruit (styled the apples of Sodom) rising out of the ashes, which at the first touch dissolved into ashes and smoke.

[3] *i. e.*, over whom, once lapsed, they triumphed.—*Newton.*

Encroaching Eve, perhaps, had first the rule
Of high Olympus, thence by Saturn driven,
And Ops, ere yet Dictæan Jove was born.
Meanwhile in Paradise the hellish pair
Too soon arrived; Sin, there in power before.
Once actual, now in body, and to dwell
Habitual habitant; behind her Death
Close following pace for pace, not mounted yet
On his pale horse: to whom Sin thus began:
"Second of Satan sprung, all-conquering Death,
What think'st thou of our empire now, though earned
With travel difficult, not better far
Than still at Hell's dark threshold to have sat watch,
Unnamed, undreaded, and thyself half-starved?"
Whom thus the Sin-born monster answered soon:
"To me, who with eternal famine pine,
Alike is Hell, or Paradise, or Heaven;
There best, where most with ravine I may meet;
Which here, though plenteous, all too little seems
To stuff this maw, this vast unhide-bound corps."[1]
To whom the incestuous mother thus replied:
"Thou, therefore, on these herbs, and fruits, and flowers,
Feed first, on each beast next, and fish, and fowl,
No homely morsels, and whatever thing
The scythe of Time mows down, devour unspared;
Till I, in man residing, through the race,
His thoughts, his looks, words, actions all infect,
And season him thy last and sweetest prey."
This said, they both betook them several ways,
Both to destroy, or unimmortal make
All kinds, and for destruction to mature
Sooner or later; which the Almighty seeing,
From his transcendent seat the saints among,
To those bright orders uttered thus his voice:
"See with what heat these dogs of Hell advance
To waste and havoc yonder world, which I
So fair and good created, and had still
Kept in that state, had not the folly of man
Let in these wasteful furies, who impute
Folly to me; so doth the prince of Hell
And his adherents, that with so much ease
I suffer them to enter and possess

[1] Alluding to his lean and meagre appearance, the skin hanging sely about him.

A place so heavenly; and conniving seem
To gratify my scornful enemies,
That laugh, as if, transported with some fit
Of passion, I to them had quitted all,
At random yielded up to their misrule;
And know not that I called and drew them thither,
My Hell-hounds, to lick up the draff and filth
Which man's polluting sin with taint hath shed
On what was pure, till, crammed and gorged nigh burst
With sucked and glutted offal, at one sling
Of thy victorious arm, well-pleasing Son,
Both Sin, and Death, and yawning grave, at last
Through Chaos hurled, obstruct the mouth of Hell
For ever, and seal up his ravenous jaws.
Then Heaven and earth, renewed, shall be made pure
To sanctity that shall receive no stain:
Till then the curse pronounced on both precedes."[1]
He ended, and the heavenly audience loud
Sung hallelujah, as the sound of seas,
Through multitude that sung: "Just are thy ways,
Righteous are thy decrees on all thy works;
Who can extenuate thee?" Next, to the Son,
"Destined Restorer of mankind, by whom
New Heaven and earth shall to the ages rise,
Or down from Heaven descend." Such was their song;
While the Creator, calling forth by name
His mighty angels, gave them several charge,
As sorted best with present things. The sun
Had first his precept so to move, so shine,
As might affect the earth with cold and heat
Scarce tolerable; and from the north to call
Decrepit winter; from the south to bring
Solstitial[2] summer's heat. To the blank moon
Her office they prescribed: to the other five
Their planetary motions and aspects,
In sextile, square, and trine, and opposite[3]

[1] I should prefer "proceeds," with Bentley; although precedes" may perhaps be used in the same sense.

[2] The word "solstitial" seems sufficient to determine from how far south Milton meant that this "summer's heat" was brought, viz., so far from the south as the sun is when he is in the summer solstice, or about 23½ degrees southward.

[3] If a planet in one part of the zodiac be distant from another by a sixth part of twelve, that is, by two signs, their aspect is called sextile; if by a fourth, square; by a third, trine; and if by one half,

Of noxious efficacy; and when to join
In synod unbenign: and taught the fixed
Their influence malignant when to shower;
Which of them, rising with the sun, or falling,
Should prove tempestuous. To the winds they set
Their corners; when with bluster to confound
Sea, air, and shore; the thunder when to roll
With terror through the dark aërial hall.
Some say he bid his angels turn askance
The poles of earth twice ten degrees and more
From the sun's axle; they with labour pushed
Oblique the centric globe: some say[1] the sun

opposite; which last is said to be of noxious efficacy, because the planets so opposed are thought to strive, debilitate, and overcome one another; deemed of evil consequence to those born under or subject to the influence of the distressed star.—*Hume.*

[1] It was eternal spring before the fall, and he is now accounting for the change of seasons after the fall, and mentions the two famous hypotheses. Some say it was occasioned by altering the position of the earth, by turning the poles of the earth above 20 deg. aside from the sun's orb: "he bid his angels turn askance the poles of earth twice ten degrees and more from the sun's axle;" and the poles of the earth are about 23½ deg. distant from those of the ecliptic; "they with labour pushed oblique the centric globe," it was erect before, but is oblique now; the obliquity of a sphere is the proper astronomical term, when the pole is raised any number of degrees less than 90; the "centric globe" fixed on its centre, and therefore moved with labour and difficulty, or rather centric, as being the centre of the world, according to the Ptolemaic system, which our author usually follows. Some say, again, this change was occasioned by altering the course of the sun, "the sun was bid turn reins from the equinoctial road," in which he had moved before, "like distant breadth" in both hemispheres; "to Taurus with the seven Atlantic sisters," the constellation Taurus, with the seven stars in his neck, the Pleiades, daughters of Atlas; "and the Spartan twins," the sign Gemini, Castor and Pollux, twin brothers, and sons of Tyndarus king of Sparta; "up to the tropic crab," the tropic of cancer, the sun's farthest stage northwards; "thence down amain," Dr Bentley reads 'as much," as much on one side of the equator as the other, but if any alteration were necessary, is it easier to read "thence down again by Leo and the Virgin," the sign Virgo; "and the scales," the constellation Libra; "as deep as Capricorn," the tropic of Capricorn, which is the sun's farthest progress southwards. This motion of the sun in the ecliptic occasions the variety of seasons, "else had the spring perpetual smiled on earth with vernant flowers," if the sun had continued to move in the equator. It is likewise Dr. Burnet's assertion, that the primitive earth enjoyed a perpetual spring, and for the same reason of the sun's moving in the equator. But though this notion of a perpetual spring may be very pleasing in poetry, yet

Was bid turn reins from the equinoctial road
Like distant breadth to Taurus, with the seven
Atlantic Sisters, and the Spartan Twins,
Up to the Tropic Crab; thence down amain
By Leo, and the Virgin, and the Scales,
As deep as Capricorn, to bring in change
Of seasons to each clime; else had the spring
Perpetual smiled on earth with vernant flowers,
Equal in days and nights, except to those
Beyond the polar circles; to them day
Had unbenighted shone, while the low sun,
To recompense his distance, in their sight
Had rounded still the horizon, and not known
Or east, or west, which had forbid the snow
From cold Estotiland,[1] and south as far
Beneath Magellan.[2] At that tasted fruit
The sun, as from Thyéstean banquet, turned
His course intended; else how had the world
Inhabited, though sinless, more than now,
Avoiding pinching cold and scorching heat?
These changes in the heavens, though slow, produced
Like change on sea and land; sideral blast,
Vapour, and mist, and exhalation hot,
Corrupt and pestilent: now from the north
Of Norumbega,[3] and the Samoed shore,[4]
Bursting their brazen dungeon, armed with ice,
And snow, and hail, and stormy gust, and flaw;[5]
Boreas,[6] and Cæcias, and Argestes loud,

it is very false in philosophy; and this position of the earth, so far from being the best, is one of the worst it could have, as Dr. Keill hath proved excellently well in the fourth chapter of his "Examination of Dr. Burnet's Theory of the Earth."—*Newton.*

[1] A tract of North America, towards the Arctic Circle and Hudson's Bay.

[2] In South America, so called from its discoverer, Fred. Magellan, in 1520.

[3] In N. America.

[4] In the N. E. of Muscovy, upon the Frozen Ocean.

[5] The same as "gust," but of stronger signification, from φλάω, *to break.*

[6] The north wind; "Cæcias," the north-west; "Argestes," the north-east; "Thracias," blowing from Thrace, northward of Greece; "Notus," the south wind; "Afer," or Africus, the south-west from Africa. "From Serraliona" or Lion Mountains, a range of mountains so called because of the perpetual storms there roaring like a lion. These are to the south-west of Africa, within a few leagues of

And Thrascias rend the woods, and seas upturn;
With adverse blasts upturns them from the south,
Notus, and Afer black with thunderous clouds
From Serraliona; thwart of these, as fierce,
Forth rush the Levant and the Ponent winds,
Eurus and Zephyr, with their lateral noise,
Sirocco and Libecchio. Thus began
Outrage from lifeless things; but Discord first,
Daughter of Sin, among the irrational,
Death introduced, through fierce antipathy:
Beast now with beast 'gan war, and fowl with fowl,
And fish with fish; to graze the herb all leaving,
Devoured each other; nor stood much in awe
Of man, but fled him, or with countenance grim
Glared on him passing. These were, from without,
The growing miseries, which Adam saw
Already in part, though hid in gloomiest shade,
To sorrow abandoned; but worse felt within,
And, in a troubled sea of passion tossed,
Thus to disburden sought with sad complaint:
"Oh, miserable of happy! is this the end
Of this new glorious world, and me so late
The glory of that glory, who now become
Accursed, of blessed? Hide me from the face
Of God, whom to behold was then my height
Of happiness! Yet well, if here would end
The misery; I deserved it, and would bear
My own deservings: but this will not serve:
All that I eat or drink, or shall beget,
Is propagated curse. Oh, voice once heard
Delightfully, 'Increase and multiply,'
Now death to hear! for what can I increase
Or multiply but curses on my head?
Who of all ages to succeed, but, feeling
The evil on him brought by me, will curse
My head? 'Ill fare our ancestor impure!
For this we may thank Adam;' but his thanks
Shall be the execration; so besides

Cape Verd, the western point; "Eurus and Zephyr," the east and west, called also "Levant" and "Ponent" winds (rising and setting), the one blowing from whence the sun rises, the other whence it sets. "Sirocco," ventus Syrus, the south-east; and "Libecchio," ventus Lybicus, the south-west: Italian terms, used by seamen of the Mediterranean.—*Richardson.*

Mine own that bide upon me, all from me
Shall with a fierce reflux on me rebound;
On me, as on their natural centre light,
Heavy, though in their place. O fleeting joys
Of Paradise, dear bought with lasting woes!
Did I request thee, Maker, from my clay
To mould me man? did I solicit thee
From darkness to promote me? or here place
In this delicious garden? As my will
Concurred not to my being, it were but right
And equal to reduce me to my dust,
Desirous to resign and render back
All I received, unable to perform
Thy terms too hard, by which I was to hold
The good I sought not. To the loss of that,
Sufficient penalty! why hast thou added
The sense of endless woes? Inexplicable
Thy justice seems; yet, to say truth, too late
I thus contest; then should have been refused
Those terms, whatever, when they were proposed:
Thou didst accept them. Wilt thou enjoy the good
Then cavil the conditions? and though God
Made thee without thy leave, what if thy son
Prove disobedient, and reproved, retort,
'Wherefore didst thou beget thee? *I sought it not:*'
Wouldst thou admit, for his contempt of thee,
That proud excuse? Yet him, not thy election,
But natural necessity, begot.
God made thee of choice his own, and of his own
To serve him: thy reward was of his grace;
Thy punishment then, justly, is at his will.
Be it so, for I submit: his doom is fair;
That dust I am, and shall to dust return.
O welcome hour whenever! Why delays
His hand to execute what his decree
Fixed on this day? Why do I over-live?
Why am I mocked with death, and lengthened out
To deathless pain? How gladly would I meet
Mortality my sentence, and be earth
Insensible! how glad would lay me down
As in my mother's lap! there I should rest
And sleep secure: his dreadful voice no more
Would thunder in my ears; no fear of worse
To me and to my offspring would torment me

With cruel expectation. Yet one doubt
Pursues me still, lest all I cannot die;[1]
Lest that pure breath of life, the spirit of man
Which God inspired, cannot together perish
With this corporeal clod; then in the grave,
Or in some other dismal place, who knows
But I shall die a living death? O thought
Horrid, if true! Yet why? It was but breath
Of life that sinned: what dies but what had life
And sin? The body properly had neither.
All of me then shall die: let this appease
The doubt, since human reach no further knows.
For though the Lord of all be infinite,
Is his wrath also? Be it; man is not so,
But mortal doomed. How can he exercise
Wrath without end on man whom death must end?
Can he make deathless death? That were to make
Strange contradiction, which to God himself
Impossible is held, as argument
Of weakness, not of power. Will he draw out,
For anger's sake, finite to infinite
In punished man, to satisfy his rigour
Satisfied never? That were to extend
His sentence beyond dust and nature's law,
By which all causes else according still
To the reception of their matter act,
Not to the extent of their own sphere. But say
That death be not one stroke, as I supposed,
Bereaving sense, but endless misery
From this day onward, which I feel begun
Both in me, and without me, and so last
To perpetuity: ay me! that fear
Comes thundering back with dreadful revolution
On my defenceless head; both Death and I
Am[2] found eternal, and incorporate both
Nor I on my part single: in me all
Posterity stands cursed. Fair patrimony
That I must leave ye, sons. Oh! were I able
To waste it all myself, and leave ye none!
So disinherited, how would ye bless
Me now your curse! Ah! why should all mankind
For one man's fault thus guiltless be condemned,

[1] From Hor. Od. iii. xxx., 6, "non *omnis* moriar."
[2] Bentley corrects, *are*.

If guiltless? But from me what can proceed,
But all corrupt, both mind and will depraved,
Not to do only, but to will the same
With me? How can they then acquitted stand
In sight of God? Him, after all disputes,
Forced I absolve: all my evasions vain;
And reasonings, though through mazes, lead me still
But to my own conviction: first and last
On me, me only, as the source and spring
Of all corruption, all the blame lights due;
So might the wrath! Fond wish! couldst thou support
That burden heavier than the earth to bear,
Than all the world much heavier, though divided
With that bad woman? Thus what thou desir'st,
And what thou fear'st, alike destroys all hope
Of refuge, and concludes thee miserable
Beyond all past example and future,
To Satan only like both crime and doom.
O conscience! into what abyss of fears
And horrors hast thou driven me, out of which
I find no way, from deep to deeper plunged!"
Thus Adam to himself lamented loud,
Through the still night; not now, as ere man fell,
Wholesome, and cool, and mild; but with black air
Accompanied, with damps and dreadful gloom,
Which to his evil conscience represented
All things with double terror: on the ground
Outstretched he lay, on the cold ground, and oft
Cursed his creation, death as oft accused
Of tardy execution, since denounced
The day of his offence. "Why comes not death,"
Said he, "with one thrice acceptable stroke
To end me? Shall truth fail to keep her word?
Justice divine not hasten to be just?
But death comes not at call; justice divine
Mends not her slowest pace for prayers or cries
O woods! O fountains, hillocks, dales, and bowers!
With other echo[1] late I taught your shades
To answer, and resound far other song."
Whom thus afflicted, when sad Eve beheld,
Desolate where she sat, approaching nigh,
Soft words to his fierce passion she assayed;
But her with stern regard he thus repelled:

[1] See v. 202.

"Out of my sight, thou serpent! that name best
Befits thee with him leagued, thyself as false
And hateful; nothing wants but that thy shape,
Like his, and colour serpentine, may show
Thy inward fraud, to warn all creatures from thee
Henceforth; lest that too heavenly form pretended
To hellish falsehood snare them. But for thee
I had persisted happy, had not thy pride
And wandering vanity, when least was safe,
Rejected my forewarning, and disdained
Not to be trusted, longing to be seen,
Though by the devil himself, him overweening
To over-reach, but with the serpent meeting
Fooled and beguiled; by him thou, I by thee;
To trust thee from my side, imagined wise,
Constant, mature, proof against all assaults;
And understood[2] not all was but a show,
Rather than solid virtue; all but a rib,
Crooked by nature; bent, as now appears,
More to the part sinister, from me drawn;
Well if thrown out, as supernumerary
To my just number found. Oh! why did God,
Creator wise, that peopled highest Heaven
With spirits masculine, create at last
This novelty on earth, this fair defect
Of nature, and not fill the world at *once*
With men, as angels, without feminine,
Or find some other way to generate
Mankind? This mischief had not then befallen,
And more that shall befall, innumerable
Disturbances on earth through female snares.
And strait conjunction with this sex: for either
He never shall find out fit mate, but such
As some misfortune brings him, or mistake;
Or whom he wishes most shall seldom gain
Through her perverseness, but shall see her gained
By a far worse, or if she love, withheld
By parents; or his happiest choice too late
Shall meet, already linked and wedlock-bound
To a fell adversary, his hate or shame;
Which infinite calamity shall cause
To human life, and household peace confound."
He added not, and from her turned; but Eve,

[1] *i. e.* held or placed before. [2] *i. e.* I understood.

Not so repulsed, with tears that ceased not flowing,
And tresses all disordered, at his feet
Fell humble, and embracing them, besought
His peace, and thus proceeded in her plaint:
"Forsake me not thus, Adam! witness Heaven
What love sincere, and reverence in my heart
I bear thee, and unweeting have offended,
Unhappily deceived! Thy suppliant
I beg, and clasp thy knees; bereave me not,
Whereon I live, thy gentle looks, thy aid,
Thy counsel in this uttermost distress,
My only strength and stay: forlorn of thee,
Whither shall I betake me, where subsist?
While yet we live, scarce one short hour perhaps,
Between us two let there be peace, both joining,
As joined in injuries, one enmity
Against a foe by doom express assigned us,
That cruel serpent: on me exercise not
Thy hatred for this misery befallen,
On me already lost, me than thyself
More miserable; both have sinned, but thou
Against God only, I against God and thee,
And to the place of judgment will return,
There with my cries importune Heaven, that all
The sentence, from thy head removed, may light
On me, sole cause to thee of all this woe,
Me, me only, just object of his ire."
She ended weeping, and her lowly plight,
Immoveable till peace obtained from fault
Acknowledged and deplored, in Adam wrought
Commiseration; soon his heart relented
Towards her, his life so late, and sole delight,
Now at his feet submissive in distress,
Creature so fair his reconcilement seeking,
His counsel whom she had displeased, his aid;
As one disarmed, his anger all he lost,
And thus with peaceful words upraised her soon:
"Unwary, and too desirous, as before,
So now of what thou know'st not, who desir'st
The punishment all on thyself; alas!
Bear thine own first, ill able to sustain
His full wrath, whose thou feel'st as yet least part,
And my displeasure bear'st so ill. If prayers
Could alter high decrees, I to that place

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PARADISE LOST.

Soon his heart relented
Towards her, his life so late and sole delight.

Would speed before thee, and be louder heard,
That on my head all might be visited,
Thy frailty and infirmer sex forgiven,
To me committed and by me exposed.
But rise, let us no more contend, nor blame
Each other, blamed enough elsewhere, but strive
In offices of love, how we may lighten
Each other's burden in our share of woe;
Since this day's death denounced, if aught I see,
Will prove no sudden, but a slow-paced evil,
A long day's dying to augment our pain,
And to our seed (O hapless seed!) derived."
To whom thus Eve, recovering heart, replied.
" Adam, by sad experiment I know
How little weight my words with thee can find,
Found so erroneous, thence by just event
Found so unfortunate; nevertheless,
Restored by thee, vile as I am, to place
Of new acceptance, hopeful to regain
Thy love, the sole contentment of my heart
Living or dying, from thee I will not hide
What thoughts in my unquiet breast are risen,
Tending to some relief of our extremes,
Or end, though sharp and sad, yet tolerable,
As in our evils, and of easier choice.
If care of our descent perplex us most
Which must be born to certain woe, devoured
By death at last; and miserable it is
To be to others cause of misery,
Our own begotten, and of our loins to bring
Into this cursed world a woeful race,
That after wretched life must be at last
Food for so foul a monster; in thy power
It lies, yet ere conception to prevent
The race unblessed, to being yet unbegot
Childless thou art, childless remain; so Death
Shall be deceived his glut, and with us two
Be forced to satisfy his ravenous maw.
But if thou judge it hard and difficult,
Conversing, looking, loving, to abstain
From love's due rites, nuptial embraces sweet,
And with desire to languish without hope,
Before the present object languishing
With like desire, which would be misery

And torment less than none of what we dread;
Then, both ourselves and seed at once to free
From what we fear for both, let us make short,
Let us seek Death, or he not found, supply
With our own hands his office on ourselves
Why stand we longer shivering under fears,
That show no end but death, and have the power,
Of many ways to die the shortest[1] choosing,
Destruction with destruction to destroy?"
She ended here, or vehement despair
Broke off the rest; so much of death her thoughts
Had entertained, as dyed her cheeks with pale
But Adam with such counsel nothing swayed,
To better hopes his more attentive mind
Labouring had raised, and thus to Eve replied:
"Eve, thy contempt of life and pleasure seems
To argue in thee something more sublime
And excellent than what thy mind contemns;
But self-destruction therefore sought, refutes
That excellence thought in thee, and implies,
Not thy contempt, but anguish and regret
For loss of life and pleasure overloved.
Or if thou covet death, as utmost end
Of misery, so thinking to evade
The penalty pronounced, doubt not but God
Hath wiselier armed his vengeful ire than so
To be forestalled; much more I fear lest death,
So snatched, will not exempt us from the pain
We are by doom to pay; rather such acts
Of contumacy will provoke the Highest
To make death in us live. Then let us seek
Some safer resolution, which methinks
I have in view, calling to mind with heed
Part of our sentence, that thy seed shall bruise
The serpent's head; piteous amends! unless
Be meant, whom I conjecture, our grand foe
Satan, who in the serpent hath contrived
Against us this deceit: to crush his head
Would be revenge indeed; which will be lost
By death brought on ourselves, or childless days
Resolved as thou proposest; so our foe
Shall 'scape his punishment ordained, and we
Instead shall double ours upon our heads

[1] *i. e.* the shortest way.

No more be mentioned then of violence
Against ourselves, and wilful barrenness,
That cuts us off from hope, and savours only
Rancour and pride, impatience and despite,
Reluctance against God and his just yoke
Laid on our necks. Remember with what mild
And gracious temper he both heard and judged
Without wrath or reviling; we expected
Immediate dissolution, which we thought
Was meant by death that day, when lo! to thee
Pains only in child-bearing were foretold,
And bringing forth, soon recompensed with joy,
Fruit of thy womb: on me the curse aslope
Glanced on the ground: with labour I must earn
My bread; what harm? Idleness had been worse,
My labour will sustain me; and lest cold
Or heat should injure us, his timely care
Hath unbesought provided, and his hands
Clothed us unworthy, pitying while he judged,
How much more, if we pray him, will his ear
Be open, and his heart to pity incline,
And teach us further by what means to shun
The inclement seasons, rain, ice, hail, and snow?
Which now the sky with various face begins
To show us in this mountain, while the winds
Blow moist and keen, shattering[1] the graceful locks
Of these fair-spreading trees; which bids us seek
Some better shroud, some better warmth to cherish
Our limbs benumbed, ere this diurnal star[2]
Leave cold the night, how we his gathered beams
Reflected, may with matter sere[3] foment;
Or, by collision of two bodies, grind
The air attrite to fire, as late the clouds
Justling, or pushed with winds, rude in their shock,

[1] This "shattering" is an excellent word, and very expressive of the sense, shaking or breaking to pieces; and etymologists derive it of the Belgic *Schetteren*; our author had used it before in his Lycidas,

"Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year."

And "locks of trees" is a Latinism: "Spissæ nemorum comæ," Hor. Od. iv. iii. 11; "arboribusque comæ," iv. vii. 2.—*Newton.*

[2] The sun.

[3] Dry So Spenser, Shepherd's Calendar, id. ii.—

"His top was bald, and wasted with worms,
His honour decayed, his branches sere."

Tine[1] the slant lightning, whose thwart flame driven down
Kindles the gummy bark of fir or pine,
And sends a comfortable heat from far,
Which might supply the sun: such fire to use,
And what may else be remedy or cure
To evils which our own misdeeds have wrought,
He will instruct us praying, and of grace
Beseeching him, so as we need not fear
To pass commodiously this life, sustained
By him with many comforts, till we end
In dust our final rest and native home
What better can we do, than, to the place
Repairing where he judged us, prostrate fall
Before him reverent, and there confess
Humbly our faults, and pardon beg, with tears
Watering the ground, and with our sighs the air
Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
Of sorrow unfeigned, and humiliation meek?
Undoubtedly he will relent and turn
From his displeasure; in whose look serene,
When angry most he seemed and most severe,
What else but favour, grace, and mercy shone?"
So spake our father penitent, nor Eve
Felt less remorse: they forthwith to the place
Repairing where he judged them, prostrate fell
Before him reverent, and both confessed
Humbly their faults, and pardon begged, with tears
Watering the ground, and with their sighs the air
Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
Of sorrow unfeigned, and humiliation meek.

[1] *i. e.* light, kindle, from the Saxon *tynan*, whence also our word *tinder*.

END OF THE TENTH BOOK

BOOK XI.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Son of God presents to his Father the prayers of our first parents, now repenting, and intercedes for them: God accepts them, but declares that they must no longer abide in Paradise; sends Michael with a band of cherubim to dispossess them; but first to reveal to Adam future things: Michael's coming down. Adam shows to Eve certain ominous signs; he discerns Michael's approach; goes out to meet him: the angel denounces their departure. Eve's lamentation. Adam pleads, but submits: the angel leads him up to a high hill; sets before him in vision what shall happen till the flood.

Thus they, in lowliest plight, repentant stood
Praying; for, from the mercy-seat above,
Prevenient grace descending had removed
The stony from their hearts, and made new flesh
Regenerate grow instead, that sighs now breathed
Unutterable, which the Spirit of prayer
Inspired, and winged for Heaven with speedier flight
Than loudest oratory; yet their port
Not of mean suitors, nor important less
Seemed their petition, than when the ancient pair
In fables old, less ancient yet than these,
Deucalion and chaste Pyrrha, to restore
The race of mankind drowned, before the shrine
Of Themis stood devout. To Heaven their prayers
Flew up, nor missed the way, by envious winds
Blown vagabond or frustrate: in they passed
Dimensionless through heavenly doors; then clad
With incense, where the golden altar fumed,
By their great Intercessor, came in sight

Before the Father's throne: them the glad Son
Presenting, thus to intercede began:
"See, Father, what first-fruits on earth are sprung
From thy implanted grace in man; these sighs
And prayers, which in this golden censer, mixed
With incense, I thy priest before thee bring,
Fruits of more pleasing savour, from thy seed
Sown with contrition in his heart, than those
Which his own hand, manuring all the trees
Of Paradise, could have produced, ere fallen
From innocence. Now therefore bend thine ear
To supplication; hear his sighs, though mute;
Unskilful with what words to pray, let me
Interpret for him, me his advocate
And propitiation:[1] all his works on me,
Good or not good, ingraft; my merit those
Shall perfect, and for these my death shall pay
Accept me, and in me from these receive
The smell of peace toward mankind; let him live
Before thee reconciled, at least his days
Numbered, though sad, till death, his doom (which I
To mitigate thus plead, not to reverse),
To better life shall yield him, where with me
All my redeemed may dwell in joy and bliss,
Made one with me, as I with thee am one."
To whom the Father, without cloud, serene:
"All thy request for man, accepted Son,
Obtain: all thy request was my decree;
But longer in that Paradise to dwell,
The law I gave to nature him forbids.
Those pure immortal elements that know
No gross, no unharmonious mixture foul,
Eject him tainted now, and purge him off
As a distemper, gross to air as gross,
And mortal food, as may dispose him best
For dissolution wrought by sin, that first
Distempered all things, and of incorrupt
Corrupted. I at first with two fair gifts
Created him endowed, with happiness
And immortality: that fondly lost,
This other served but to eternize woe,
Till I provided death; so death becomes
His final remedy, and after life

[1] 1 John ii. 15.

Tried in sharp tribulation, and refined
By faith and faithful works, to second life,
Waked in the renovation of the just,
Resigns him up with Heaven and earth renewed
But let us call to synod all the blest
Through Heaven's wide bounds; from them I will not hide
My judgments, how with mankind I proceed,
As how with peccant angels late they saw,
And in their state, though firm, stood more confirmed."
He ended; and the Son gave signal high
To the bright minister that watched: he blew
His trumpet, heard in Oreb since perhaps
When God descended, and perhaps once more
To sound at general doom. The angelic blast
Filled all the regions: from their blissful bowers
Of amaranthine shade, fountain, or spring,
By the waters of life, where'er they sat
In fellowships of joy, the sons of light
Hasted, resorting to the summons high,
And took their seats; till from his throne supreme
The Almighty thus pronounced his sovran will:
"O sons! like one of us man is become
To know both good and evil, since his taste
Of that defended[1] fruit; but let him boast
His knowledge of good lost, and evil got;
Happier, had it sufficed him to have known
Good by itself, and evil not at all.
He sorrows now, repents, and prays contrite,
My motions in him; longer than they move,
His heart I know how variable and vain,
Self-left. Lest therefore his now bolder hand
Reach also of the tree of life, and eat,
And live for ever, dream at least to live
For ever, to remove him I decree,
And send him from the garden forth to till
The ground whence he was taken, fitter soil.
"Michael, this my behest have thou in charge
Take to thee from among the cherubim
Thy choice of flaming warriors, lest the fiend,
Or in behalf of man, or to invade
Vacant possession, some new trouble raise:
Haste thee, and from the Paradise of God
Without remorse drive out the sinful pair,

[1] Forbidden. The word is similarly used by Chaucer.

From hallowed ground the unholy, and denounce
To them and to their progeny from thence
Perpetual banishment. Yet lest they faint
At the sad sentence rigorously urged
(For I behold them softened, and with tears
Bewailing their excess), all terror hide.
If patiently thy bidding they obey,
Dismiss them not disconsolate; reveal
To Adam what shall come in future days,
As I shall thee enlighten: intermix
My covenant in the woman's seed renewed;
So send them forth, though sorrowing, yet in peace;
And on the east side of the garden place,
Where entrance up from Eden easiest climbs,
Cherubic watch, and of a sword the flame
Wide-waving, all approach far off to fright,
And guard all passage to the tree of life;
Lest Paradise a receptacle prove
To spirits foul, and all my trees their prey,
With whose stolen fruit man once more to delude."
He ceased; and the archangelic power prepared
For swift descent; with him the cohort bright
Of watchful cherubim: four faces each
Had, like a double Janus; all their shape
Spangled with eyes, more numerous than those
Of Argus,[1] and more wakeful than to drowse,
Charmed with Arcadian pipe, the pastoral reed
Of Hermes, or his opiate rod.[2] Meanwhile,
To resalute the world with sacred light,
Leucothea[3] waked, and with fresh dews embalmed
The earth; when Adam and first matron Eve
Had ended now their orisons, and found
Strength added from above; new hope to spring
Out of despair; joy, but with fear yet linked;
Which thus to Eve his welcome words renewed:
"Eve! easily may faith admit that all

[1] Mercury was employed by Jupiter to lull Argus, a shepherd who had a hundred eyes, asleep, and kill him.

[2] "Or his opiate rod," the caduceus of Mercury, with which he could give sleep to whomsoever he pleased. With this pipe and this rod he lulled Argus asleep and cut off his head.

[3] The "white goddess," as the name in Greek imports, the same with "Matuta" in Latin; and "Matuta" is the early morning that ushers in the Aurora rosy with the sunbeams.

The good which we enjoy from Heaven descends:
But, that from us aught should ascend to Heaven,
So prevalent as to concern the mind
Of God high-blest, or to incline his will,
Hard to belief may seem; yet this will prayer,
Or one short sigh of human breath, upborne
Even to the seat of God. For since I sought
By prayer the offended Deity to appease,
Kneeled, and before him humbled all my heart,
Methought I saw him placable, and mild,
Bending his ear: persuasion in me grew
That I was heard with favour; peace returned
Home to my breast; and to my memory
His promise, that thy seed shall bruise our foe;
Which, then not minded in dismay, yet now
Assures me that the bitterness of death
Is past, and we shall live. Whence hail to thee,
Eve rightly called, mother of all mankind!
Mother of all things living, since by thee
Man is to live; and all things live for man."

To whom thus Eve, with sad demeanour meek:
"Ill-worthy I, such title should belong
To me transgressor! who, for thee ordained
A help, became thy snare: to me reproach
Rather belongs, distrust, and all dispraise.
But infinite in pardon was my Judge,
That I, who first brought death on all, am graced
The source of life: next favourable thou,
Who highly thus to entitle me vouchsaf'st,
Far other name deserving. But the field
To labour calls us, now with sweat imposed,
Though after sleepless night; for see! the morn,
All unconcerned with our unrest, begins
Her rosy progress smiling: let us forth;
I never from thy side henceforth to stray,
Where'er our day's work lies, though now enjoined
Laborious till day droop: while here we dwell,
What can be toilsome in these pleasant walks?
Here let us live, though in fallen state, content!"

So spake, so wished, much-humbled Eve; but fate
Subscribed[1] not: nature first gave signs, impressed

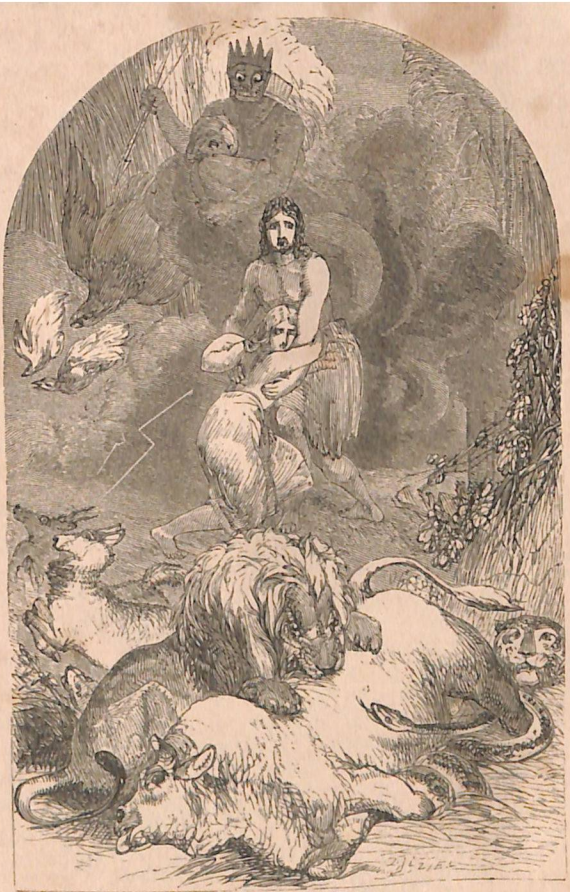
[1] Consented. So in Measure for Measure, act ii.:—

"Admit no other way to save his life,
As I subscribe not."

On bird, beast, air: air suddenly eclipsed,
After short blush of morn; nigh in her sight
The bird of Jove, stooped from his airy tour,
Two birds of gayest plume before him drove;
Down from a hill the beast that reigns in woods,
First hunter then, pursued a gentle brace,
Goodliest of all the forest, hart and hind;
Direct to the eastern gate was bent their flight.
Adam observed, and with his eye the chase
Pursuing, not unmoved, to Eve thus spake:
"O Eve! some further change awaits us nigh,
Which Heaven, by these mute signs of nature, shows
Forerunners of his purpose: or to warn
Us, haply too secure of our discharge
From penalty, because from death released
Some days: how long, and what till then our life,
Who knows? or more than this, that we are dust,
And thither must return, and be no more?
Why else this double object in our sight
Of flight pursued in the air, and o'er the ground,
One way the self-same hour? why in the east
Darkness ere day's mid-course, and morning-light
More orient in yon western cloud, that draws
O'er the blue firmament a radiant white,
And slow descends with something heavenly fraught?"
He erred not; for by this the heavenly bands
Down from the sky of jasper lighted now
In Paradise, and on a hill made halt,
A glorious apparition, had not doubt
And carnal fear that day dimmed Adam's eye
Not that more glorious, when the angels met
Jacob in Mahanaim,[1] where he saw
The field pavilioned with his guardians bright;
Nor that, which on the flaming mount appeared
In Dothan,[2] covered with a camp of fire,
Against the Syrian king; who, to surprise
One man, assassin like, had levied war,[3]
War unproclaimed. The princely hierarch
In their bright stand there left his powers, to seize

[1] Gen. xxxii. 1. [2] 2 Kings, vi. 13, sqq.

[3] Warburton thinks that Milton hints at the war with Holland, which broke out in 1664, when the fleet of the Dutch was surprised and captured before war had been proclaimed—a transaction which gave great scandal to the Whigs.



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PARADISE LOST.

Down from a hill the beast that reigns in woods,
First hunter then.

Possession of the garden: he alone,
To find where Adam sheltered, took his way;
Not unperceived of Adam, who to Eve,
While the great visitant approached, thus spake:
"Eve, now expect great tidings, which perhaps
Of us will soon determine, or impose
New laws to be observed; for I descry,
From yonder blazing cloud that veils the hill,
One of the heavenly host, and, by his gait,
None of the meanest; some great potentate,
Or of the thrones above; such majesty
Invests him coming! yet not terrible,
That I should fear; nor sociably mild,
As Raphaël, that I should much confide;
But solemn and sublime; whom, not to offend,
With reverence I must meet, and thou retire."
He ended: and the archangel soon drew nigh,
Not in his shape celestial, but as man
Clad to meet man; over his lucid arms
A military vest of purple flowed,
Livelier than Melibœan,[1] or the grain
Of Sarra,[2] worn by kings and heroes old
In time of truce; Iris had dipped the woof:
His starry helm unbuckled showed him prime
In manhood where youth ended: by his side,
As in a glistering zodiac, hung the sword,
Satan's dire dread; and in his hand the spear.
Adam bowed low: he, kingly, from his state
Inclined not, but his coming thus declared·
"Adam! Heaven's high behest no preface needs:
Sufficient that thy prayers are heard; and Death,
Then due by sentence when thou didst transgress,
Defeated of his seizure: many days
Given thee of grace, wherein thou mayst repent,
And one bad act with many deeds well done
Mayst cover: well may then thy Lord, appeased,
Redeem thee quite from Death's rapacious claim;
But longer in this Paradise to dwell
Permits not: to remove thee I am come,
And send thee from the garden forth, to till
The ground whence thou wast taken; fitter soil."

[1] So called from a city of Thessaly, famous for the *ostrum*, or purple-fish, there caught.
[2] *i. e.* the Tyrian purple.

He added not; for Adam at the news
Heart-struck with chilling gripe of sorrow stood
That all his senses bound: Eve, who unseen
Yet all had heard, with audible lament
Discovered soon the place of her retire:
"Oh, unexpected stroke, worse than of death!
Must I thus leave thee, Paradise? thus leave
Thee, native soil, these happy walks and shades,
Fit haunt of gods? where I had hope to spend,
Quiet, though sad, the respite of that day
That must be mortal to us both. O flowers,
That never will in other climate grow,
My early visitation, and my last
At even, which I bred up with tender hand
From the first opening bud, and gave ye names;
Who now shall rear ye to the sun, or rank
Your tribes, and water from the ambrosial fount?
Thee lastly, nuptial bower, by me adorned,
With what to sight or smell was sweet; from thee
How shall I part, and whither wander down
Into a lower world, to this obscure
And wild? how shall we breathe in other air
Less pure, accustomed to immortal fruits?"
Whom thus the angel interrupted mild:
"Lament not, Eve, but patiently resign
What justly thou hast lost: nor set thy heart,
Thus over-fond, on that which is not thine:
Thy going is not lonely; with thee goes
Thy husband; him to follow thou art bound;
Where he abides, think there thy native soil."
Adam, by this from the cold sudden damp
Recovering, and his scattered spirits returned,
To Michael thus his humble words addressed:
"Celestial, whether among the thrones, or named
Of them the highest, for such of shape may seem
Prince above princes, gently hast thou told
Thy message, which might else in telling wound,
And in performing end us; what besides
Of sorrow and dejection and despair
Our frailty can sustain, thy tidings bring,
Departure from this happy place, our sweet
Recess, and only consolation left
Familiar to our eyes; all places else
Inhospitable appear and desolate,

Nor knowing us nor known: and if by prayer
Incessant I could hope to change the will
Of him who all things can, I would not cease
To weary him with my assiduous cries:
But prayer against his absolute decree
No more avails than breath against the wind,
Blown stifling back on him that breathes it forth:
Therefore to his great bidding I submit.
This most afflicts me, that, departing hence,
As from his face I shall be hid, deprived
His blessed countenance; here I could frequent
With worship place by place where he vouchsafed
Presence divine, and to my sons relate,
On this mount he appeared; under this tree
Stood visible; among these pines his voice
I heard; here with him at this fountain talked:
So many grateful altars I would rear
Of grassy turf, and pile up every stone
Of lustre from the brook, in memory,
Or monument to ages, and thereon
Offer sweet smelling gums, and fruits, and flowers
In yonder nether world where shall I seek
His bright appearances, or footstep trace?
For though I fled him angry, yet, recalled
To life prolonged and promised race, I now
Gladly behold though but his utmost skirts[1]
Of glory, and far off his steps adore."

To whom thus Michael with regard benign:
"Adam, thou knowest Heaven his, and all the earth,
Not this rock only; his omnipresence fills
Land, sea, and air, and every kind that lives,
Fomented by his virtual power and warmed:
All the earth he gave thee to possess and rule,
No despicable gift; surmise not then
His presence to these narrow bounds confined
Of Paradise or Eden: this had been
Perhaps thy capital seat, from whence had spread
All generations, and had hither come
From all the ends of the earth, to celebrate
And reverence thee their great progenitor.
But this pre-eminence thou hast lost, brought down
To dwell on even ground now with thy sons:
Yet doubt not but in valley and in plain

[1] Cf. Exod. xxxiii. 22, sqq.

God is as here, and will be found alike
Present, and of his presence many a sign
Still following thee, still compassing thee round
With goodness and paternal love, his face
Express, and of his steps the track divine.
Which that thou mayst believe, and be confirmed
Ere thou from hence depart, know I am sent
To show thee what shall come in future days
To thee and to thy offspring; good with bad
Expect to hear, supernal grace contending
With sinfulness of men; thereby to learn
True patience, and to temper joy with fear,
And pious sorrow, equally inured
By moderation either state to bear,
Prosperous or adverse: so shalt thou lead
Safest thy life, and best prepared endure
Thy mortal passage when it comes. Ascend
This hill; let Eve (for I have drenched her eyes)
Here sleep below, while thou to foresight wakest;
As once thou slept'st, while she to life was formed"
To whom thus Adam gratefully replied:
"Ascend; I follow thee, safe guide, the path
Thou lead'st me, and to the hand of Heaven submit,
However chastening; to the evil turn
My obvious breast; arming to overcome
By suffering, and earn rest from labour won,
If so I may attain." So both ascend
In the visions of God. It was a hill
Of Paradise the highest, from whose top
The hemisphere of earth in clearest ken
Stretched out to the amplest reach of prospect lay.
Not higher that hill nor wider looking round,
Whereon for different cause the tempter set
Our second Adam in the wilderness,
To show him all earth's kingdoms and their glory
His eye might there command wherever stood
City of old or modern fame, the seat
Of mightiest empire, from the destined walls
Of Cambalu,[1] seat of Cathaian Can,

[1] He first takes a view of Asia, and there of the northern parts, "the destined walls" not yet in being, but designed to be (which is to be understood of all the rest) "of Cambalu, seat of Cathaian Can," the principal city of Cathay, a province of Tartary, the ancient seat of the Chams; "and Samarchand by Oxus," the chief city of Zagathaian

And Samarchand by Oxus, Temir's throne,
To Paquin of Sinæan kings; and thence
To Agra and Lahor, of great Mogul,
Down to the golden Chersonese; or where
The Persian in Ecbatan sat, or since
In Hispahan; or where the Russian Ksar
In Mosco, or the Sultan in Bizance,
Turchestan-born: nor could his eye not ken
The empire of Negus to his utmost port,
Ercoco, and the less maritime kings,
Mombaza, and Quiloa, and Melind,
And Sofala thought Ophir, to the realm
Of Congo, and Angola farthest south;
Or thence from Niger flood to Atlas mount,
The kingdoms of Almansor, Fez and Sus,
Marocco, and Algiers, and Tremisen;

Tartary, near the river Oxus; "Temir's throne," the birthplace and royal residence of Tamerlane; and from the northern he passes to the eastern and southern parts of Asia; "to Paquin," or Pekin, of "Sinæan kings," the royal city of China, the country of the ancient Sinæ, mentioned by Ptolemy, "and thence to Agra and Lahor," two great cities in the empire "of the great Mogul, down to the golden Chersonese," that is, Malacca, the most southern promontory of the East Indies, so called on account of its riches, to distinguish it from the other Chersoneses, or peninsulas; "or where the Persian in Ecbatan sat," Ecbatana, formerly the capital city of Persia; "or since in Hispahan," the capital city at present; "or where the Russian Ksar," the Czar of Muscovy; "in Mosco," the metropolis of all Russia; "or the Sultan in Bizance," the Grand Signior in Constantinople, formerly Byzantium; "Turchestan-born," as the Turks came from Turchestan, a province of Tartary; he reckons these to Asia, as they are adjoining, and great part of their territories lie in Asia. He passes now into Africa; "nor could his eye not ken the empire of Negus,' the Upper Ethiopia, or the land of the Abyssinians, subject to one sovereign, styled in their own language Negus or king, and by the Europeans Prester John; "to his utmost port Ercoco," or Erquico, on the Red Sea, the north-east boundary of the Abyssinian empire; "and the less maritime kings," the lesser kingdoms on the sea coast; "Mombaza, and Quiloa, and Melind," all near the line in Zanguebar, a great region of the Lower Ethiopia, on the eastern or Indian sea, and subject to the Portuguese; "and Sofala, thought Ophir," another kingdom and city on the same sea, mistaken by Purchas and others for Ophir, whence Solomon brought gold; "to the realm of Congo," a kingdom in the lower Ethiopia, on the western shore, as the others were on the eastern; "and Angola farthest south," another kingdom south of Congo; "or thence from Niger flood," the river Niger, that divides Negroland into two parts; "to Atlas mount" in the most western parts of Africa; "the kingdoms of Almansor," the countries over which Almansor was king, namely, "Fez and Sus, Marocco and

On Europe thence, and where Rome was to sway
The world: in spirit perhaps he also saw
Rich Mexico, the seat of Montezume,
And Cusco, in Peru, the richer seat
Of Atabalipa, and yet unspoiled
Guiana, whose great city Geryon's sons
Call El Dorado; but to nobler sights
Michael from Adam's eyes the film removed,
Which that false fruit that promised clearer sight
Had bred; then purged with euphrasy[1] and rue
The visual nerve, for he had much to see;
And from the well of life three drops instilled.
So deep the power of these ingredients pierced,
E'en to the inmost seat of mental sight,
That Adam, now enforced to close his eyes,
Sunk down, and all his spirits became entranced,
But him the gentle angel by the hand
Soon raised, and his attention thus recalled:
"Adam, now ope thine eyes, and first behold
The effects which thy original crime hath wrought
In some to spring from thee, who never touched
The excepted tree, nor with the snake conspired,
Nor sinned thy sin, yet from that sin derive
Corruption to bring forth more violent deeds."
His eyes he opened, and beheld a field,
Part arable and tilth, whereon were sheaves
New reaped, the other part sheep-walks and folds;
I' the midst an altar as the landmark stood,
Rustic, of grassy sord;[2] thither anon

Algiers, and Tremisen," all kingdoms in Barbary. After Africa he comes to Europe: "on Europe thence, and where Rome was to sway the world:" the less is said of Europe as it is so well known. "In spirit perhaps he also saw," he could not see it otherwise, as America was on the opposite side of the globe; "rich Mexico," in North America, "the seat of Montezume," who was subdued by the Spanish general Cortes; "and Cusco in Peru," in South America, "the richer seat of Atabalipa," the last emperor subdued by the Spanish general Pizarro; "and yet unspoiled Guiana," another country of South America, not theninvaded and spoiled; "whose great city," namely Manhoa, "Geryon's sons," the Spaniards, from Geryon, an ancient king of Spain, "call El Dorado," or the golden city, on account of its richness and extent. And thus he surveys the four different parts of the world, but, it must he confessed, more with an ostentation of learning, than with any additional beauty to the poem.—*Newton.*

[1] Or eye-bright.

[2] Swerd, sward, turf.

A sweaty reaper from his tillage brought
First-fruits, the green ear, and the yellow sheaf,
Unculled, as came to hand; a shepherd next.
More meek, came with the firstlings of his flock,
Choicest and best; then sacrificing, laid
The inwards and their fat, with incense strewed,
On the cleft wood, and all due rites performed:
His offering soon propitious fire from Heaven
Consumed with nimble glance and grateful steam;
The other's not, for his was not sincere:
Whereat he inly raged; and, as they talked,
Smote him into the midriff with a stone
That beat out life: he fell, and, deadly pale,
Groaned out his soul with gushing blood effused.
Much at that sight was Adam in his heart
Dismayed; and thus, in haste, to the angel cried
"O teacher! some great mischief had befallen
To that meek man, who well had sacrificed!
Is piety thus and pure devotion paid?"
To whom Michael thus, he also moved, replied:
"These two are brethren, Adam, and to come
Out of thy loins; the unjust the just hath slain,
For envy that his brother's offering found
From Heaven acceptance; but the bloody fact
Will be avenged, and the other's faith, approved,
Lose no reward, though here thou see him die,
Rolling in dust and gore." To which our sire:
"Alas! both for the deed and for the cause!
But have I now seen death? Is this the way
I must return to native dust? Oh, sight
Of terror, foul and ugly to behold!
Horrid to think! how horrible to feel!"
To whom thus Michael: "Death thou hast seen
In his first shape on man; but many shapes
Of Death, and many are the ways that lead
To his grim cave, all dismal; yet to sense
More terrible at the entrance than within.
Some, as thou saw'st, by violent stroke shall die;
By fire, flood, famine; by intemperance more
In meats and drinks, which on the earth shall bring
Diseases dire, of which a monstrous crew
Before thee shall appear, that thou mayst know
What misery the inabstinence of Eve
Shall bring on men." Immediately a place

Before his eyes appeared, sad, noisome, dark;
A lazar-house it seemed, wherein were laid
Numbers of all diseased, all maladies
Of ghastly spasm, or racking torture, qualms
Of heart-sick agony; all feverous kinds,
Convulsions, epilepsies, fierce catarrhs,
Intestine stone and ulcer, colic pangs,
Demoniac frenzy, moping melancholy,
And moon-struck madness, pining atrophy,
Marasmus, and wide-wasting pestilence,
Dropsies, and asthmas, and joint-racking rheums.
Dire was the tossing, deep the groans; Despair
Tended the sick busiest from couch to couch;
And over them triumphant Death his dart
Shook, but delayed to strike, though oft invoked
With vows, as their chief good, and final hope.
Sight so deform, what heart of rock could long
Dry-eyed behold? Adam could not, but wept,
Though not of woman born; compassion quelled
His best of man, and gave him up to tears
A space, till firmer thoughts restrained excess;
And, scarce recovering words, his plaint renewed:
"Oh, miserable mankind! to what fall
Degraded! to what wretched state reserved!
Better end here unborn. Why is life given
To be thus wrested from us? rather why
Obtruded on us thus? who, if we knew
What we receive, would either not accept
Life offered, or soon beg to lay it down,
Glad to be so dismissed in peace. Can thus
The image of God, in man created once
So goodly and erect, though faulty since,
To such unsightly sufferings be debased
Under inhuman pains? Why should not man,
Retaining still divine similitude
In part, from such deformities be free,
And for his Maker's image sake exempt?"
"Their Maker's image," answered Michael, "then
Forsook them, when themselves they vilified
To serve ungoverned appetite, and took
His image whom they served, a brutish vice,
Inductive mainly to the sin of Eve.
Therefore so abject is their punishment.
Disfiguring not God's likeness, but their own

Or, if his likeness, by themselves defaced,
While they pervert pure nature's healthful rules
To loathsome sickness; worthily, since they
God's image did not reverence in themselves"
"I yield it just," said Adam, "and submit.
But is there yet no other way, besides
These painful passages, how we may come
To death, and mix with our connatural dust?"
"There is," said Michael, "if thou well observe
The rule of not too much, by temperance taught,
In what thou eat'st and drink'st, seeking from thence
Due nourishment, not gluttonous delight,
Till many years over thy head return:
So mayst thou live, till like ripe fruit thou drop
Into thy mother's lap, or be with ease
Gathered, not harshly plucked, for death mature:
This is old age; but then thou must outlive
Thy youth, thy strength, thy beauty, which will change
To withered, weak, and gray; thy senses then
Obtuse, all taste of pleasure must forego,
To what thou hast; and for the air of youth,
Hopeful and cheerful, in thy blood will reign
A melancholy damp of cold and dry
To weigh thy spirits down, and last consume
The balm of life." To whom our ancestor·
"Henceforth I fly not death, nor would prolong
Life much, bent rather how I may be quit,
Fairest and easiest, of this cumbrous charge,
Which I must keep till my appointed day
Of rendering up, and patiently attend
My dissolution." Michaël replied:
"Nor love thy life, nor hate; but what thou liv'st
Live well; how long or short, permit to Heaven:
And now prepare thee for another sight."
He looked, and saw a spacious plain, whereon
Were tents of various hue; by some were herds
Of cattle grazing; others, whence the sound
Of instruments that made melodious chime
Was heard, of harp and organ; and who moved
Their stops and chords was seen: his volant touch
Instinct through all proportions low and high
Fled and pursued transverse the resonant fugue.
In other part stood one who at the forge
Labouring, two massy clods of iron and brass

Had melted (whether found where casual fire
Had wasted woods on mountain or in vale,
Down to the veins of earth, thence gliding hot
To some cave's mouth, or whether washed by stream
From under ground); the liquid ore he drained
Into fit moulds prepared; from which he formed,
First, his own tools; then, what might else be wrought
Fusil or graven in metal. After these,
But on the hither side, a different sort
From the high neighbouring hills, which was their seat,
Down to the plain descended: by their guise,
Just men they seemed, and all their study bent
To worship God aright, and know his works
Not hid, nor those things last which might preserve
Freedom and peace to men: they on the plain
Long had not walked, when from the tents, behold!
A bevy of fair women, richly gay
In gems and wanton dress; to the harp they sung
Soft amorous ditties, and in dance came on:
The men, though grave, eyed them, and let their eyes
Rove without rein, till, in the amorous net
Fast caught, they liked, and each his liking chose;
And now of love they treat, till the evening star,
Love's harbinger, appeared; then all in heat
They light the nuptial torch, and bid invoke
Hymen, then first to marriage rites invoked:
With feast and music all the tents resound.
Such happy interview and fair event
Of love and youth not lost, songs, garlands, flowers,
And charming symphonies, attached the heart
Of Adam, soon inclined to admit delight,
The bent of nature; which he thus expressed:
"True opener of mine eyes! prime angel blest!
Much better seems this vision, and more hope
Of peaceful days portends, than those two past:
Those were of hate and death, or pain much worse.
Here nature seems fulfilled in all her ends."
To whom thus Michael: "Judge not what is best
By pleasure, though to nature seeming meet,
Created as thou art to nobler end,
Holy and pure, conformity divine.
Those tents thou saw'st so pleasant, were the tents
Of wickedness, wherein shall dwell his race
Who slew his brother; studious they appear

Of arts that polish life, inventors rare,
Unmindful of their Maker, though his Spirit
Taught them; but they his gifts acknowledged none.
Yet they a beauteous offspring shall beget;
For that fair female troop thou saw'st, that seemed
Of goddesses, so blithe, so smooth, so gay,
Yet empty of all good, wherein consists
Woman's domestic honour and chief praise,
Bred only and completed to the taste
Of lustful appetence, to sing, to dance,
To dress, and troll the tongue, and roll the eye;
To these that sober race of men,[1] whose lives
Religious titled them the sons of God,
Shall yield up all their virtue, all their fame,
Ignobly, to the trains and to the smiles
Of these fair atheists; and now swim in joy,
Ere long to swim at large; and laugh, for which
The world, ere long, a world[2] of tears must weep."
To whom thus Adam, of short joy bereft:
"Oh, pity and shame, that they, who to live well
Entered so fair, should turn aside to tread
Paths indirect, or in the midway faint!
But still I see the tenor of man's woe
Holds on the same, from woman to begin."
"From man's effeminate slackness it begins,"
Said the angel, "who should better hold his place
By wisdom, and superior gifts received.
But now prepare thee for another scene."
He looked, and saw wide territory spread
Before him; towns, and rural works between;
Cities of men with lofty gates and towers,
Concourse in arms, fierce faces threatening war,
Giants of mighty bone, and bold emprise;[3]
Part wield their arms, part curb the foaming steed,
Single, or in array of battle ranged,
Both horse and foot; nor idly mustering stood:
One way a band select from forage drives
A herd of beeves, fair oxen and fair kine,
From a fat meadow-ground; or fleecy flock,

[1] See Gen. vi. 2. The sons of Seth are meant

[2] There is the same jingle in ix. 11.

"That brought into this *world a world* of woe."

[3] Enterprise.

Ewes and their bleating lambs, over the plain,
Their booty; scarce with life the shepherds fly,
But call in aid, which makes a bloody fray:
With cruel tournament the squadrons join;
Where cattle pastured late, now scattered lies
With carcasses and arms the ensanguined field,
Deserted. Others to a city strong
Lay siege, encamped, by battery, scale, and mine,
Assaulting: others from the wall defend,
With dart and javelin, stones, and sulphurous fire:
On each hand slaughter, and gigantic deeds.
In other part the sceptred heralds call
To council, in the city gates: anon
Gray-headed men and grave, with warriors mixed,
Assemble, and harangues are heard; but soon,
In factious opposition; till at last
Of middle age one rising, eminent
In wise deport, spake much of right and wrong,
Of justice, of religion, truth, and peace,
And judgment from above: him old and young
Exploded, and had seized with violent hands,
Had not a cloud descending snatched him thence,
Unseen amid the throng: so violence
Proceeded, and oppression, and sword-law,
Through all the plain; and refuge none was found.
Adam was all in tears, and to his guide
Lamenting turned full sad: "Oh, what are these?
Death's ministers, not men! who thus deal death
Inhumanly to men, and multiply
Ten thousandfold the sin of him who slew
His brother; for of whom such massacre
Make they, but of their brethren, men of men?
But who was that just man, whom had not Heaven
Rescued, had in his righteousness been lost?"
To whom thus Michael: "These are the product
Of those ill-mated marriages thou saw'st;
Where good with bad were matched, who of themselves
Abhor to join; and by imprudence mixed,
Produce prodigious births of body or mind.
Such were these giants, men of high renown;
For in those days might only shall be admired,
And valour and heroic virtue called:
To overcome in battle, and subdue
Nations, and bring home spoils with infinite

Man-slaughter, shall be held the highest pitch
Of human glory; and for glory done[1]
Of triumph, to be styled great conquerors,
Patrons of mankind, gods, and sons of gods;
Destroyers rightlier called, and plagues of men!
Thus fame shall be achieved, renown on earth;
And what most merits fame in silence hid.
But he, the seventh[2] from thee, whom thou beheld'st
The only righteous in a world perverse,
And therefore hated, therefore so beset
With foes, for daring single to be just,
And utter odious truth that God would come
To judge them with his saints: him the Most High,
Rapt in a balmy cloud with winged steeds,
Did, as thou saw'st, receive, to walk with God
High in salvation and the climes of bliss,
Exempt from death, to show thee what reward
Awaits the good, the rest what punishment;
Which[3] now direct thine eyes, and soon behold."
He looked, and saw the face of things quite changed
The brazen throat of war had ceased to roar:
All now was turned to jollity and game,
To luxury and riot, feast and dance,
Marrying or prostituting, as befell,
Rape or adultery, where passing fair
Allured them; thence from cups to civil broils.
At length a reverend sire[4] among them came,
And of their doings great dislike declared,
And testified against their ways: he oft
Frequented their assemblies, whereso met,
Triumphs, or festivals; and to them preached
Conversion and repentance, as to souls
In prison, under judgments imminent;
But all in vain! Which when he saw, he ceased
Contending, and removed his tents far off:
Then, from the mountain hewing timber tall,
Began to build a vessel of huge bulk,
Measured by cubit, length, and breadth, and height;

[1] Bentley reads "glory won or triumph." Newton explains the passage to mean, *to overcome, to subdue, to spoil, shall be held the highest pitch of glory*, and "shall be *done* for glory of triumph."
[2] Enoch. See Jude 14, sqq.
[3] *i. e.* Which behold thou, directing thine eyes to them.
[4] Noah. See 2 Peter ii. 5; 1 Peter iii. 19, 20.

Smeared round with pitch; and in the side a door
Contrived; and of provisions laid in large,
For man and beast: when lo! a wonder strange!
Of every beast, and bird, and insect small,
Came sevens, and pairs; and entered in, as taught
Their order: last the sire, and his three sons
With their four wives: and God made fast the door.
Meanwhile the south-wind rose, and, with black wings
Wide hovering, all the clouds together drove
From under Heaven: the hills, to their supply,
Vapour and exhalation, dusk and moist,
Sent up amain. And now the thickened sky
Like a dark ceiling stood: down rushed the rain
Impetuous; and continued, till the earth
No more was seen: the floating vessel swum
Uplifted, and secure with beaked prow
Rode tilting o'er the waves: all dwellings else
Flood overwhelmed, and them with all their pomp
Deep under water rolled: sea covered sea,
Sea without shore: and in their palaces,
Where luxury late reigned, sea-monsters whelped
And stabled: of mankind (so numerous late)
All left, in one small bottom swum embarked.
How didst thou grieve then, Adam! to behold
The end of all thy offspring; end so sad,
Depopulation! Thee another flood,
Of tears and sorrow a flood, thee also drowned,
And sunk thee as thy sons; till, gently reared
By the angel, on thy feet thou stood'st at last,
Though comfortless; as when a father mourns
His children, all in view destroyed at once,
And scarce to the angel uttered'st thus thy plaint
"Oh, visions ill foreseen! Better had I
Lived ignorant of future! so had borne
My part of evil only; each day's lot
Enough to bear: those now, that were dispensed
The burden of many ages, on me light
At once, by my foreknowledge gaining birth
Abortive, to torment me, ere their being,
With thought that they must be. Let no man seek
Henceforth to be foretold what shall befall
Him or his children; evil he may be sure,
Which neither his foreknowing can prevent;
And he the future evil shall, no less

In apprehension than in substance, feel,
Grievous to bear. But that care now is past;
Man is not whom to warn: those few escaped
Famine and anguish will at last consume
Wandering that watery desert: I had hope
When violence was ceased, and war on earth,
All would have then gone well, peace would have crowned
With length of happy days the race of man;
But I was far deceived; for now I see
Peace to corrupt no less than war to waste.
How comes it thus? unfold, celestial guide,
And whether here the race of man will end."
To whom thus Michael: "Those whom last thou saw'st
In triumph and luxurious wealth, are they
First seen in acts of prowess eminent
And great exploits, but of true virtue void;
Who having spilt much blood, and done much waste,
Subduing nations, and achieved thereby
Fame in the world, high titles, and rich prey,
Shall change their course to pleasure, ease, and sloth,
Surfeit and lust, till wantonness and pride
Raise out of friendship hostile deeds in peace.
The conquered also, and enslaved by war,
Shall with their freedom lost all virtue lose
And fear of God, from whom their piety feigned
In sharp contest of battle found no aid
Against invaders; therefore cooled in zeal,
Thenceforth shall practise how to live secure,
Worldly or dissolute, on what their lords
Shall leave them to enjoy; for the earth shall bear
More than enough, that temperance may be tried:
So all shall turn degenerate, all depraved;
Justice and temperance, truth and faith, forgot;
One man except, the only son of light
In a dark age, against example good,
Against allurement, custom, and a world
Offended; fearless of reproach and scorn,
Or violence, he of their wicked ways
Shall them admonish, and before them set
The paths of righteousness, how much more safe,
And full of peace, denouncing wrath to come
On their impenitence; and shall return
Of them derided, but of God observed,
The one just man alive; by his command

Shall build a wondrous ark, as thou beheld'st,
To save himself and household from amidst
A world devote to universal wreck.
No sooner he with them of man and beast
Select for life shall in the ark be lodged,
And sheltered round, but all the cataracts
Of Heaven set open on the earth shall pour
Rain day and night; all fountains of the deep
Broke up, shall heave the ocean to usurp
Beyond all bounds, till inundation rise
Above the highest hills: then shall this mount
Of Paradise by might of waves be moved
Out of his place, pushed by the horned flood,
With all his verdure spoiled, and trees adrift,
Down the great river to the opening gulf,
And there take root an island salt and bare,
The haunt of seals, and orcs,[1] and sea-mews' clang:
To teach thee that God attributes to place
No sanctity, if none be thither brought
By men who there frequent, or therein dwell.
And now what further shall ensue, behold."
He looked, and saw the ark hull[2] on the flood,
Which now abated; for the clouds were fled,
Driven by a keen north-wind, that blowing dry,
Wrinkled the face of deluge, as decayed;
And the clear sun on his wide watery glass
Gazed hot, and of the fresh wave largely drew,
As after thirst, which made their flowing shrink
From standing lake to tripping ebb, that stole
With soft foot towards the deep, who now had stopped
His sluices, as the Heaven his windows shut.
The ark no more now floats, but seems on ground,
Fast on the top of some high mountain fixed.
And now the tops of hills as rocks appear;
With clamour thence the rapid currents drive
Towards the retreating sea their furious tide.
Forthwith from out the ark a raven flies,
And, after him, the surer messenger,
A dove sent forth once and again to spy
Green tree or ground whereon his foot may light;
The second time returning, in his bill

[1] Orca, a large sea animal.

[2] A vessel is said to "hull," when all her sails are lowered, and she floats to and fro.

An olive-leaf he brings, pacific sign:
Anon dry ground appears, and from his ark
The ancient sire descends with all his train,
Then with uplifted hands, and eyes devout,
Grateful to Heaven, over his head beholds
A dewy cloud, and in the cloud a bow
Conspicuous with three lifted colours gay,
Betokening peace from God, and covenant new.
Whereat the heart of Adam, erst so sad,
Greatly rejoiced, and thus his joy broke forth:
"O thou who future things canst represent
As present! heavenly instructor! I revive
At this last sight, assured that man shall live
With all the creatures, and their seed preserve.
Far less I now lament for one whole world
Of wicked sons destroyed, than I rejoice
For one man found so perfect and so just,
That God vouchsafes to raise another world
From him, and all his anger to forget.
But say, what mean those coloured streaks in Heaven
Distended, as the brow of God appeased
Or serve they as a flowery verge to bind
The fluid skirts of that same watery cloud,
Lest it again dissolve and shower the earth?"
To whom the archangel: "Dexterously thou aim'st;
So willingly doth God remit his ire,
Though late repenting him of man depraved,
Grieved at his heart when looking down he saw
The whole earth filled with violence, and all flesh
Corrupting each their way; yet, those removed,
Such grace shall one just man find in his sight,
That he relents, not to blot out mankind,
And makes a covenant never to destroy
The earth again by flood, nor let the sea
Surpass his bounds, nor rain to drown the world
With man therein or beast; but when he brings
Over the earth a cloud, will therein set
His triple-coloured bow, whereon to look,
And call to mind his covenant: day and night,
Seed-time and harvest, heat and hoary frost,
Shall hold their course, till fire purge all things new,
Both Heaven and earth, wherein the just shall dwell."

END OF THE ELEVENTH BOOK.

BOOK XII.

THE ARGUMENT.

The angel Michael continues from the flood to relate what shall succeed; then, in the mention of Abraham, comes by degrees to explain who that seed of the woman shall be, which was promised Adam and Eve in the fall; his incarnation, death, resurrection, and ascension; the state of the church till his second coming. Adam, greatly satisfied and recomforted by these relations and promises, descends the hill with Michael; wakens Eve, who all this while had slept, but with gentle dreams composed to quietness of mind and submission. Michael in either hand leads them out of Paradise, the fiery sword waving behind them, and the cherubim taking their stations to guard the place.

As one who in his journey bates at noon,
Though bent on speed, so here the archangel paused
Betwixt the world destroyed and world restored,
If Adam aught perhaps might interpose;
Then with transition sweet new speech resumes:
"Thus thou hast seen one world begin and end;
And man as from a second stock proceed.
Much thou hast yet to see, but I perceive
Thy mortal sight to fail; objects divine
Must needs impair and weary human sense:
Henceforth what is to come I will relate,
Thou, therefore, give due audience, and attend.
This second source of men, while yet but few,
And while the dread of judgment past remains
Fresh in their minds, fearing the Deity,
With some regard to what is just and right
Shall lead their lives, and multiply apace,
Labouring the soil, and reaping plenteous crop,
Corn, wine, and oil; and from the herd or flock,
Oft sacrificing bullock, lamb, or kid,

With large wine-offerings poured, and sacred feast,
Shall spend their days in joy unblamed, and dwell
Long time in peace by families and tribes
Under paternal rule: till one shall rise
Of proud ambitious heart, who, not content
With fair equality, fraternal state,
Will arrogate dominion undeserved
Over his brethren, and quite dispossess
Concord and law of nature from the earth,
Hunting (and men, not beasts, shall be his game)
With war and hostile snare such as refuse
Subjection to his empire tyrannous:
A mighty hunter thence he shall be styled
Before the Lord, as in despite of Heaven,
Or from Heaven claiming second sovranty,
And from rebellion shall derive his name,
Though of rebellion others he accuse.
He with a crew, whom like ambition joins
With him or under him to tyrannize,
Marching from Eden towards the west, shall find
The plain, wherein a black bituminous gurge
Boils out from under ground, the mouth of Hell:
Of brick, and of that stuff, they cast to build
A city and tower, whose top may reach to Heaven;
And get themselves a name, lest, far dispersed
In foreign lands, their memory be lost.
Regardless whether good or evil fame.
But God, who oft descends to visit men
Unseen, and through their habitations walks
To mark their doings, them beholding soon,
Comes down to see their city, ere the tower
Obstruct Heaven-towers, and in derision sets
Upon their tongues a various spirit to rase
Quite out their native language, and instead
To sow a jangling noise of words unknown:
Forthwith a hideous gabble rises loud
Among the builders; each to other calls
Not understood, till hoarse, and all in rage,
As mocked they storm; great laughter was in Heaven,
And looking down, to see the hubbub strange,
And hear the din; thus was the building left
Ridiculous, and the work Confusion named."

Whereto thus Adam, fatherly displeased:
"O execrable son! so to aspire

Above his brethren, to himself assuming
Authority usurped, from God not given,
He gave us only over beast, fish, fowl,
Dominion absolute; that right we hold
By his donation; but man over men
He made not lord; such title to himself
Reserving, human left from human free.[1]
But this usurper his encroachment proud
Stays not on man; to God his tower intends
Siege and defiance. Wretched man! what food
Will he convey up thither to sustain
Himself and his rash army, where thin air
Above the clouds will pine his entrails gross,
And famish him of breath, if not of bread?"
To whom thus Michael: "Justly thou abhorr'st
That son, who on the quiet state of men
Such trouble brought, affecting to subdue
Rational liberty; yet know withal,
Since thy original lapse, true liberty
Is lost, which always with right reason dwells
Twinned, and from her hath no dividual being.
Reason in man obscured, or not obeyed,
Immediately inordinate desires
And upstart passions catch the government
From reason, and to servitude reduce
Man, till then free. Therefore, since he permits
Within himself unworthy powers to reign
Over free reason, God, in judgment just,
Subjects him from without to violent lords,
Who oft as undeservedly enthral
His outward freedom: tyranny must be,
Though to the tyrant thereby no excuse.
Yet sometimes nations will decline so low
From virtue, which is reason, that no wrong
But justice, and some fatal curse annexed,
Deprives them of their outward liberty,
Their inward lost: witness the irreverent son
Of him who built the ark, who for the shame
Done to his father, heard this heavy curse,
'Servant of servants,' on his vicious race.
Thus will this latter, as the former world,
Still tend from bad to worse, till God at last,

[1] We need scarcely point out the bent of Milton's anti-royal disposition in this passage.

Wearied with their iniquities, withdraw
His presence from among them, and avert
His holy eyes; resolving from thenceforth
To leave them to their own polluted ways;
And one peculiar nation to select
From all the rest, of whom to be invoked,
A nation from one faithful man to spring.
Him, on this side Euphrates yet residing,
Bred up in idol worship[1] (Oh, that men—
Canst thou believe?—should be so stupid grown,
While yet the patriarch lived who 'scaped the flood,
As to forsake the living God, and fall
To worship their own work in wood and stone
For gods!), yet him God the Most High vouchsafes
To call by vision, from his father's house,
His kindred, and false gods, into a land
Which He will show him, and from him will raise
A mighty nation; and upon him shower
His benediction so, that in his seed
All nations shall be blest: he straight obeys,
Not knowing to what land, yet firm believes.
I see him (but thou canst not), with what faith
He leaves his gods, his friends, and native soil,
Ur of Chaldæa, passing now the ford
To Haran; after him a cumbrous train
Of herds, and flocks, and numerous servitude;
Not wandering poor, but trusting all his wealth
With God, who called him in a land unknown
Canaan he now attains: I see his tents
Pitched about Sichem, and the neighbouring plain
Of Moreh; there, by promise, he receives
Gift to his progeny of all that land,
From Hamath northward to the desert south
(Things by their names I call, though yet unnamed);
From Hermon east to the great western sea,
Mount Hermon, yonder sea; each place behold
In prospect, as I point them; on the shore
Mount Carmel; here the double-founted stream,
Jordan, true limit eastward: but his sons
Shall dwell to Senir, that long ridge of hills.
This ponder, that all nations of the earth
Shall in his seed be blessed: by that seed

[1] Cf. Josh. xxiv. 2. It will be quite unnecessary to point out the vast number of scriptural references in the following passage.

Is meant thy great Deliverer, who shall bruise
The serpent's head; whereof to thee anon
Plainlier shall be revealed. This patriarch blest,
Whom faithful Abraham due time shall call,
A son, and of his son a grandchild, leaves;
Like him in faith, in wisdom, and renown.
The grandchild, with twelve sons increased, departs
From Canaan, to a land hereafter called
Egypt, divided by the river Nile:
See where it flows, disgorging at seven mouths
Into the sea. To sojourn in that land
He comes, invited by a younger son
In time of dearth; a son, whose worthy deeds
Raise him to be the second in that realm
Of Pharaoh: there he dies, and leaves his race
Growing into a nation; and, now grown,
Suspected to a sequent king, who seeks
To stop their overgrowth, as inmate guests
Too numerous; whence of guests he makes them slaves
Inhospitably; and kills their infant males:
Till by two brethren (these two brethren call
Moses and Aaron) sent from God to claim
His people from enthralment, they return
With glory, and spoil, back to their promised land.
But first the lawless tyrant, who denies
To know their God, or message to regard,
Must be compelled by signs, and judgments dire;
To blood unshed the rivers must be turned;
Frogs, lice, and flies, must all his palace fill
With loathed intrusion, and fill all the land;
His cattle must of rot and murrain die;
Botches and blains must all his flesh emboss,
And all his people; thunder mixed with hail,
Hail mixed with fire, must rend the Egyptian sky,
And wheel on the earth, devouring where it rolls;
What it devours not, herb, or fruit, or grain,
A darksome cloud of locusts swarming down
Must eat, and on the ground leave nothing green;
Darkness must overshadow all his bounds,
Palpable darkness, and blot out three days:
Last, with one midnight-stroke, all the first-born
Of Egypt must lie dead. Thus with ten wounds
The river-dragon tamed at length submits
To let his sojourners depart, and oft

Humbles his stubborn heart, but still, as ice
More hardened after thaw: till in his rage
Pursuing whom he late dismissed, the sea
Swallows him with his host, but them lets pass,
As on dry land, between two crystal walls,
Awed by the rod of Moses so to stand
Divided, till his rescued gain their shore:
Such wondrous power God to his saint will lend,
Though present in his angel, who shall go
Before them in a cloud, and pillar of fire
(By day a cloud, by night a pillar of fire),
To guide them in their journey, and remove
Behind them, while the obdurate king pursues.
All night he will pursue; but his approach
Darkness defends between, till morning watch;
Then through the fiery pillar, and the cloud,
God looking forth will trouble all his host,
And craze[1] their chariot-wheels: when, by command,
Moses once more his potent rod extends
Over the sea; the sea his rod obeys;
On their embattled ranks the waves return,
And overwhelm their war. The race elect,
Safe towards Canaan, from the shore advance
Through the wild desert; not the readiest way,
Lest, entering on the Canaanite alarmed,
War terrify them inexpert, and fear
Return them back to Egypt, choosing rather
Inglorious life with servitude; for life
To noble and ignoble is more sweet
Untrained in arms, where rashness leads not on.
This also shall they gain by their delay
In the wide wilderness: there they shall found
Their government, and their great senate choose
Through the twelve tribes, to rule by laws ordained.
God from the mount of Sinai (whose gray top
Shall tremble, he descending) will himself
In thunder, lightning, and loud trumpets' sound,
Ordain them laws; part, such as appertain
To civil justice, part, religious rites
Of sacrifice; informing them, by types
And shadows, of that destined Seed to bruise
The serpent, by what means he shall achieve
Mankind's deliverance: but the voice of God

[1] Break to pieces.

To mortal ear is dreadful; they beseech
That Moses might report to them his will,
And terror cease: he grants what they besought,
Instructed that to God is no access
Without Mediator, whose high office now
Moses in figure bears, to introduce
One greater, of whose day he shall foretell;
And all the prophets in their age the times
Of great Messiah shall sing. Thus laws and rites
Established, such delight hath God in men
Obedient to his will, that he vouchsafes
Among them to set up his tabernacle,
The Holy One with mortal men to dwell
By his prescript a sanctuary is framed
Of cedar, overlaid with gold; therein
An ark, and in the ark his testimony,
The records of his covenant; over these
A mercy-seat of gold, between the wings
Of two bright cherubim; before him burn
Seven lamps, as in a zodiac representing
The heavenly fires;[1] over the tent a cloud
Shall rest by day, a fiery gleam by night,
Save when they journey: and at length they come,
Conducted by his angel, to the land
Promised to Abraham and his seed. The rest
Were long to tell; how many battles fought;
How many kings destroyed, and kingdoms won;
Or how the sun shall in mid-heaven stand still
A day entire, and night's due course adjourn,
Man's voice commanding, 'Sun, in Gibeon stand,
And thou, moon, in the vale of Ajalon,
Till Israel overcome!' so called the third
From Abraham, son of Isaac; and from him
His whole descent, who thus shall Canaan win."

Here Adam interposed: "O sent from Heaven,
Enlight'ner of my darkness! gracious things
Thou hast revealed; those chiefly, which concern
Just Abraham and his seed: now first I find
Mine eyes true opening, and my heart much eased,
Erewhile perplexed with thoughts what would become

[1] That the seven lamps signified the seven planets, and that therefore the lamps stood slopewise, as it were to express the obliquity of the zodiac, is the gloss of Josephus, from whom probably our author borrowed it.—*Newton*

Of me and all mankind; but now I see
His day, in whom all nations shall be blest,
Favour unmerited by me, who sought
Forbidden knowledge by forbidden means
This yet I apprehend not, why to those
Among whom God will deign to dwell on earth
So many and so various laws are given;
So many laws argue so many sins
Among them; how can God with such reside?"
To whom thus Michael: "Doubt not but that sin
Will reign among them, as of thee begot;
And therefore was law given them to evince
Their natural pravity, by stirring up
Sin against law to fight: that when they see
Law can discover sin, but not remove,
Save by those shadowy expiations weak,
The blood of bulls and goats, they may conclude
Some blood more precious must be paid for man,
Just for unjust, that in such righteousness,
To them by faith imputed, they may find
Justification towards God, and peace
Of conscience, which the law by ceremonies
Cannot appease, nor man the moral part
Perform; and, not performing, cannot live.
So law appears imperfect, and but given
With purpose to resign them in full time
Up to a better covenant; disciplined
From shadowy types to truth; from flesh to spirit,
From imposition of strict laws to free
Acceptance of large grace; from servile fear
To filial; works of law to works of faith.
And therefore shall not Moses, though of God
Highly beloved, being but the minister
Of law, his people into Canaan lead;
But Joshua, whom the Gentiles Jesus call,
His name and office bearing, who shall quell
The adversary serpent, and bring back
Through the world's wilderness long-wandered man
Safe to eternal Paradise of rest.
Meanwhile they, in their earthly Canaan placed,
Long time shall dwell and prosper, but when sins
National interrupt their public peace,
Provoking God to raise them enemies;
From whom as oft he saves them penitent,

By judges first, then under kings; of whom
The second, both for piety renowned
And puissant deeds, a promise shall receive
Irrevocable, that his regal throne
For ever shall endure; the like shall sing
All prophecy, that of the royal stock
Of David (so I name this king) shall rise
A son, the woman's seed to thee foretold,
Foretold to Abraham, as in whom shall trust
All nations; and to kings foretold, of kings
The last; for of his reign shall be no end.
But first, a long succession must ensue,
And his next son, for wealth and wisdom famed,
The clouded ark of God, till then in tents
Wandering, shall in a glorious temple enshrine.
Such follow him as shall be registered,
Part good, part bad, of bad the longer scroll,
Whose foul idolatries, and other faults
Heaped to the popular sum, will so incense
God, as to leave them, and expose their land,
Their city, his temple, and his holy ark,
With all his sacred things, a scorn and prey
To that proud city, whose high walls thou saw'st
Left in confusion, Babylon thence called.
There in captivity he lets them dwell
The space of seventy years, then brings them back,
Remembering mercy, and his covenant sworn
To David, 'stablished as the days of Heaven
Returned from Babylon by leave of kings,
Their lords, whom God disposed, the house of God
They first re-edify, and for a while
In mean estate live moderate; till, grown
In wealth and multitude, factious they grow;
But first among the priests dissension springs;
Men who attend the altar, and should most
Endeavour peace: their strife pollution brings
Upon the temple itself: at last they seize
The sceptre, and regard not David's sons,
Then lose it to a stranger,[1] that the true
Anointed King, Messiah, might be born
Barred of his right; yet at his birth a star,
Unseen before in Heaven, proclaims him come,
And guides the eastern sages, who inquire

[1] Herod.

His place, to offer incense, myrrh, and gold:
His place of birth a solemn angel tells
To simple shepherds, keeping watch by night;
They gladly thither haste, and by a quire
Of squadroned angels hear his carol sung.
A virgin is his mother, but his sire
The power of the Most High; he shall ascend
The throne hereditary, and bound his reign
With earth's wide bounds, his glory with the Heavens.
He ceased, discerning Adam with such joy
Surcharged, as had like grief been dewed in tears,
Without the vent of words, which these he breathed:
"O prophet of glad tidings! finisher
Of utmost hope! now clear I understand
What oft my steadiest thoughts have searched in vain;
Why our great expectation should be called
'The seed of woman.' Virgin mother, hail!
High in the love of Heaven! yet from my loins
Thou shalt proceed, and from thy womb the Son
Of God Most High; so God with man unites.
Needs must the serpent now his capital bruise
Expect with mortal pain: say where and when
Their fight, what stroke shall bruise the victor's heel."
To whom thus Michael: "Dream not of their fight
As of a duel, or the local wounds
Of head or heel: not therefore joins the Son
Manhood to Godhead, with more strength to foil
Thy enemy; nor so is overcome
Satan, whose fall from Heaven, a deadlier bruise,
Disabled not to give thee thy death's wound:
Which he, who comes thy Saviour, shall re-cure,
Not by destroying Satan, but his works
In thee and in thy seed: nor can this be,
But by fulfilling that which thou didst want,
Obedience to the law of God, imposed
On penalty of death, and suffering death,
The penalty to thy transgression due,
And due to theirs which out of thine will grow:
So only can high justice rest appaid.
The law of God exact he shall fulfil
Both by obedience and by love, though love
Alone fulfil the law; thy punishment
He shall endure by coming in the flesh
To a reproachful life and cursed death,

Proclaiming life to all who shall believe
In his redemption, and that his obedience
Imputed becomes theirs by faith, his merits
To save them, not their own, though legal, works.
For this he shall live hated, be blasphemed,
Seized on by force, judged, and to death condemned
A shameful and accursed; nailed to the cross
By his own nation; slain for bringing life:
But to the cross he nails thy enemies,
The law that is against thee, and the sins
Of all mankind, with him there crucified,
Never to hurt them more who rightly trust
In this his satisfaction: so he dies,
But soon revives; death over him no power
Shall long usurp; ere the third dawning light
Return, the stars of morn shall see him rise
Out of his grave, fresh as the dawning light,
Thy ransom paid, which man from death redeems,
His death for man, as many as offered life
Neglect not, and the benefit embrace
By faith not void of works. this God-like act
Annuls thy doom, the death thou shouldst have died
In sin for ever lost from life; this act
Shall bruise the head of Satan, crush his strength,
Defeating sin and death, his two main arms,
And fix far deeper in his head their stings
Than temporal death shall bruise the victor's heel,
Or theirs whom he redeems, a death like sleep,
A gentle wafting to immortal life.
Nor after resurrection shall he stay
Longer on earth than certain times to appear
To his disciples, men who in his life
Still followed him; to them shall leave in charge
To teach all nations what of him they learned
And his salvation, them who shall believe,
Baptizing in the profluent stream, the sign
Of washing them from guilt of sin to life
Pure, and in mind prepared, if so befall,
For death, like that which the[1] Redeemer died.
All nations they shall teach; for, from that day,
Not only to the sons of Abraham's loins
Salvation shall be preached, but to the sons
Of Abraham's faith wherever through the world;

[1] Bentley prefers "their."

So in his seed all nations shall be blest.
Then to the Heaven of Heavens he shall ascend
With victory, triumphing through the air
Over his foes and thine; there shall surprise
The serpent, prince of air, and drag in chains
Through all his rêalm, and there confounded leave;
Then enter into glory, and resume
His seat at God's right hand, exalted high
Above all names in Heaven; and thence shall come,
When this world's dissolution shall be ripe,
With glory and power to judge both quick and dead,
To judge the unfaithful dead, but to reward
His faithful, and receive them into bliss,
Whether in Heaven or earth; for then the earth
Shall all be Paradise, far happier place
Than this of Eden, and far happier days."
So spake the archangel Michaël; then paused,
As at the world's great period; and our sire,
Replete with joy and wonder, thus replied:
"Oh, goodness infinite! goodness immense!
That all this good of evil shall produce,
And evil turn to good; more wonderful
Than that which by creation first brought forth
Light out of darkness; full of doubt I stand,
Whether I should repent me now of sin
By me done and occasioned, or rejoice
Much more, that much more good thereof shall spring
To God more glory, more good-will to men
From God, and over wrath grace shall abound.
But say, if our Deliverer up to Heaven
Must reascend, what will betide the few
His faithful, left among the unfaithful herd,
The enemies of truth? Who then shall guide
His people? who defend? Will they not deal
Worse with his followers than with him they dealt?"
"Be sure they will," said the angel; "but from Heaven
He to his own a Comforter will send,
The promise of the Father, who shall dwell
His Spirit within them, and the law of faith
Working through love, upon their hearts shall write,
To guide them in all truth, and also arm
With spiritual armour, able to resist
Satan's assaults, and quench his fiery darts:
What man can do against them, not afraid,

Though to the death; against such cruelties
With inward consolations recompensed,
And oft supported so as shall amaze
Their proudest persecutors; for the Spirit,
Poured first on his apostles, whom he sends
To evangelize the nations, then on all
Baptized, shall them with wondrous gifts endue
To speak all tongues, and do all miracles,
As did their Lord before them. Thus they win
Great numbers of each nation to receive
With joy the tidings brought from Heaven: at length
Their ministry performed, and race well run,
Their doctrine and their story written left,
They die; but in their room, as they forewarn,
Wolves shall succeed for teachers, grievous wolves,
Who all the sacred mysteries of Heaven
To their own vile advantages shall turn
Of lucre and ambition, and the truth
With superstitions and traditions taint
Left only in those written records pure,
Though not but by the Spirit understood.
Then shall they seek to avail themselves of names,
Places, and titles, and with these to join
Secular power, though feigning still to act
By spiritual, to themselves appropriating
The Spirit of God, promised alike and given
To all believers; and from that pretence,
Spiritual laws by carnal power shall force
On every conscience; laws which none shall find
Left them enrolled, or what the Spirit within
Shall on the heart engrave. What will they then
But force the Spirit of grace itself, and bind
His consort liberty? what, but unbuild
His living temples, built by faith to stand,
Their own faith, not another's? for on earth
Who against faith and conscience can be heard
Infallible? yet many will presume:
Whence heavy persecution shall arise
On all who in the worship persevere
Of spirit and truth; the rest, far greater part,
Will deem in outward rites and specious forms
Religion satisfied; truth shall retire
Bestruck with slanderous darts, and works of faith
Rarely be found: so shall the world go on,

To good malignant, to bad men benign,
Under her own weight groaning, till the day
Appear of respiration to the just,
And vengeance to the wicked, at return
Of him so lately promised to thy aid,
The woman's Seed, obscurely then foretold,
Now amplier known thy Saviour and thy Lord,
Last in the clouds from Heaven to be revealed
In glory of the Father, to dissolve
Satan with his perverted world, then raise
From the conflagrant mass, purged and refined,
New heavens, new earth,[1] ages of endless date
Founded in righteousness and peace and love,
To bring forth fruits, joy, and eternal bliss."
He ended; and thus Adam last replied:
"How soon hath thy prediction, seer blest,
Measured this transient world, the race of time,
Till time stand fixed! Beyond is all abyss,
Eternity, whose end no eye can reach.
Greatly instructed, I shall hence depart,
Greatly in peace of thought, and have my fill
Of knowledge, what this vessel can contain;
Beyond which was my folly to aspire.
Henceforth I learn that to obey is best,
And love with fear the only God, to walk
As in his presence, ever to observe
His providence, and on him sole depend,
Merciful over all his works, with good
Still overcoming evil, and by small
Accomplishing great things; by things deemed weak
Subverting worldly strong; and worldly wise
By simply meek: that suffering for truth's sake
Is fortitude to highest victory,
And to the faithful death the gate of life:
Taught this by his example, whom I now
Acknowledge my Redeemer ever blest."

[1] The very words of St. Peter, 2 Peter, iii. 13:—"Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." This notion of the heavens and earth being renewed after the conflagration, and made the habitation of angels and just men made perfect, was very pleasing to our author, as it was to Dr. Burnet, and must be to every one of a fine and exalted imagination; and Milton has enlarged upon it in several parts of his works, and particularly in this poem, iii. 333, &c., x. 638, xi. 65, 900, xii. 462.—*Newton.*

To whom thus also the angel last replied:
"This having learned, thou hast attained the sum
Of wisdom: hope no higher, though all the stars
Thou knew'st by name, and all the ethereal powers,
All secrets of the deep, all nature's works,
Or works of God in Heaven, air, earth, or sea,
And all the riches of this world enjoyedst,
And all the rule, one empire; only add
Deeds to thy knowledge answerable; add faith
Add virtue, patience, temperance; add love,
By name to come called charity, the soul
Of all the rest: then wilt thou not be loth
To leave this Paradise, but shalt possess
A Paradise within thee, happier far.
Let us descend now, therefore, from this top
Of speculation;[1] for the hour precise
Exacts our parting hence; and see, the guards,
By me encamped on yonder hill, expect
Their motion, at whose front a flaming sword,
In signal of remove, waves fiercely round;
We may no longer stay. go, waken Eve;
Her also I with gentle dreams have calmed
Portending good, and all her spirits composed
To meek submission: thou at season fit
Let her with thee partake what thou hast heard,
Chiefly what may concern her faith to know,
The great deliverance by her seed to come
(For by the woman's seed) on all mankind:
That ye may live, which will be many days,
Both in one faith unanimous, though sad,
With cause, for evils past, yet much more cheered
With meditation on the happy end."
He ended, and they both descend the hill;
Descended, Adam to the bower where Eve
Lay sleeping ran before, but found her waked;
And thus with words not sad she him received:[2]

[1] *i. e.* this height of vision, this hill of prophecy and prediction.

[2] Milton's poem ends very nobly. The last speeches of Adam and the archangel are full of moral and instructive sentiments. The sleep that fell upon Eve, and the effects it had in quieting the disorders of her mind, produce the same kind of consolation in the reader, who cannot peruse the last beautiful speech which is ascribed to the mother of mankind, without a secret pleasure and satisfaction. The following lines, which conclude the poem, rise in a most glorious blaze of poetical images and expressions.—*Addison.*

"Whence thou return'st, and whither went'st, I know;
For God is also in sleep; and dreams advise,
Which he hath sent propitious, some great good
Presaging, since, with sorrow and heart's distress,
Wearied I fell asleep: but now lead on;
In me is no delay; with thee to go,
Is to stay here; without thee here to stay,
Is to go hence unwilling; thou to me
Art all things under Heaven, all places thou,
Who for my wilful crime art banished hence
This further consolation, yet secure,
I carry hence; though all by me is lost,
Such favour I unworthy am vouchsafed,
By me the promised Seed shall all restore!"
So spake our mother Eve, and Adam heard,
Well pleased, but answered not; for now too nigh
The archangel stood, and from the other hill
To their fixed station, all in bright array,
The cherubim descended; on the ground,
Gliding meteorous,[1] as evening mist,
Risen from a river, o'er the marish[2] glides,
And gathers ground fast at the labourer's heel,
Homeward returning. High in front advanced,
The brandished sword of God before them blazed,
Fierce as a comet, which with torrid heat,
And vapour as the Lybian air adust,
Began to parch that temperate clime; whereat,
In either hand the hastening angel caught
Our lingering parents, and to the eastern gate
Led them direct, and down the cliff as fast
To the subjected plain; then disappeared
They, looking back, all the eastern side beheld
Of Paradise, so late their happy seat,
Waved over by that flaming brand; the gate,
With dreadful faces thronged, and fiery arms:

[1] Heliodorus, in his Ethiopics, acquaints us that the motion of the gods differs from that of mortals, as the former do not stir their feet, nor proceed step by step, but slide o'er the surface of the earth by an uniform swimming of the whole body. The reader may observe with how poetical a description Milton has attributed the same kind of motion to the angels who were to take possession of Paradise.—*Addison.*

[2] An old word for marsh, of the French *marais*, and of the Latin *mariscus*, rushes commonly growing there. The word occurs in 1 Maccab. ix. 42.

Some natural tears they dropped, but wiped them soon:
The world was all before them, where to choose
Their place of rest, and Providence their guide;
They, hand in hand, with wandering steps and slow
Through Eden took their solitary way.

END OF PARADISE LOST.

Paradise Regained.[1]

BOOK I.

I, WHO erewhile the happy garden sung,
By one man's disobedience lost, now sing
Recovered Paradise to all mankind,
By one man's firm obedience fully tried
Through all temptation, and the tempter foiled
In all his wiles, defeated and repulsed,
And Eden raised in the waste wilderness.
Thou Spirit, who ledst this glorious eremite[2]
Into the desert, his victorious field,
Against the spiritual foe, and brought him thence,
By proof the undoubted Son of God, inspire,
As thou art wont, my prompted song, else mute,
And bear through height or depth of nature's bounds,
With prosperous wing full summed,[3] to tell of deeds
Above heroic, though in secret done,
And unrecorded left through many an age;
Worthy to have not remained so long unsung.
Now had the great proclaimer, with a voice
More awful than the sound of trumpet, cried

[1] "Paradise Regained," observes Jortin, "has not met with the approbation that it deserves. It has not the harmony of numbers, the sublimity of thought, and the beauties of diction, which are in 'Paradise Lost.' It is composed in a lower and less striking style, a style suited to the subject. Artful sophistry, false reasoning, set off in the most specious manner, and refuted by the Son of God with strong unaffected eloquence, is the peculiar excellence of this poem. Satan there defends a bad cause with great skill and subtlety, as one thoroughly versed in that craft."

[2] The same as our "hermit."

[3] So in Paradise Lost, vii. 421:—"They summed their pens." The term is properly applied to a hawk in full feather.

Repentance, and Heaven's kingdom nigh at hand,
To all baptized:[1] to his great baptism flocked
With awe the regions round, and with them came
From Nazareth the son of Joseph deemed
To the flood Jordan, came as then obscure,
Unmarked, unknown; but him the Baptist soon
Descried, divinely warned, and witness bore
As to his worthier, and would have resigned
To him his heavenly office, nor was long
His witness unconfirmed: on him baptized
Heaven opened and, in likeness of a dove,
The Spirit descended, while the Father's voice
From Heaven pronounced him his beloved Son.
That heard the adversary, who, roving still
About the world, at that assembly famed
Would not be last; and with the voice divine
Nigh thunder-struck, the exalted Man, to whom
Such high attest was given, a while surveyed
With wonder; then, with envy fraught and rage
Flies to his place, nor rests, but in mid air
To council summons all his mighty peers,
Within thick clouds, and dark, tenfold involved,
A gloomy consistory;[2] and them amidst,
With looks aghast and sad, he thus bespake:
"O ancient powers of air[3] and this wide world,
For much more willingly I mention air,
This our old conquest, than remember Hell,
Our hated habitation; well ye know
How many ages, as the years of men,
This universe we have possessed, and ruled,
In manner at our will, the affairs of earth,
Since Adam and his facile consort Eve
Lost Paradise, deceived by me, though since
With dread attending[4] when that fatal wound
Shall be inflicted by the seed of Eve
Upon my head: long the decrees of Heaven
Delay, for longest time to him is short;
And now, too soon for us, the circling hours
This dreaded time have compassed, wherein we

[1] *i. e.* to such as were baptized, since by John's baptism they were prepared for the reception of the Gospel.

[2] Milton probably uses this term with a sly reference to the meetings of the Pope and his Cardinals, under the same name.

[3] Cf. Eph. ii. 2; vi. 12 [4] Awaiting.

Must bide the stroke of that long-threatened wound,
At least, if so we can, and by the head
Broken be not intended all our power
To be infringed, our freedom and our being,
In this fair empire won of earth and air:
For this ill news I bring, the woman's seed
Destined to this, is late of woman born;
His birth to our just fear gave no small cause,
But his growth now to youth's full flower, displaying
All virtue, grace, and wisdom to achieve
Things highest, greatest, multiplies my fear.
Before him a great prophet, to proclaim
His coming, is sent harbinger, who all
Invites, and in the consecrated stream
Pretends to wash off sin, and fit them so
Purified to receive him pure, or, rather,
To do him honour as their king; all come,
And he himself among them was baptized,
Not thence to be more pure, but to receive
The testimony of Heaven, that who he is
Thenceforth the nations may not doubt; I saw
The prophet do him reverence; on him rising
Out of the water, Heaven above the clouds
Unfold her crystal doors; thence on his head
A perfect dove descend, whate'er it meant;
And out of Heaven the sovran voice I heard,
'This is my Son beloved, in him am pleased.'
His mother then is mortal, but his Sire
He who obtains the monarchy of Heaven,
And what will he not do to advance his Son?
His first-begot we know, and sore have felt,
When his fierce thunder drove us to the deep;
Who this is we must learn,[1] for man he seems
In all his lineaments, though in his face
The glimpses of his Father's glory shine.
Ye see our danger on the utmost edge
Of hazard, which admits no long debate,
But must with something sudden be opposed
(Not force, but well-couched fraud, well woven snares)

[1] Our author favours the opinion of Ignatius and others, who believed that the devil, though he might know Jesus to be some extraordinary person, yet knew him not to be the Messiah, the Son of God; and the words of the devil, "if thou be the Son of God," seem to express his uncertainty concerning that matter.—*Newton.*

Ere in the head of nations he appear,
Their king, their leader, and supreme on earth.
I, when no other durst, sole undertook
The dismal expedition to find out
And ruin Adam, and the exploit performed
Successfully; a calmer voyage now
Will waft me; and the way found prosperous once,
Induces best to hope of like success."
He ended; and his words impression left
Of much amazement to the infernal crew,
Distracted and surprised with deep dismay
At these sad tidings; but no time was then
For long indulgence to their fears or grief:
Unanimous they all commit the care
And management of this main enterprise
To him their great dictator, whose attempt
At first against mankind so well had thrived
In Adam's overthrow, and led their march
From Hell's deep-vaulted den to dwell in light,
Regents, and potentates, and kings, yea gods,
Of many a pleasant realm and province wide
So to the coast of Jordan he directs
His easy steps, girded with snaky wiles,[1]
Where he might likeliest find this new-declared,
This man of men, attested Son of God,
Temptation and all guile on him to try;
So to subvert whom he suspected raised
To end his reign on earth, so long enjoyed;
But, contrary, unweeting he fulfilled
The purposed counsel pre ordained and fixed
Of the Most High, who, in full frequence bright
Of angels, thus to Gabriel smiling spake:
"Gabriel, this day by proof thou shalt behold,
Thou and all angels conversant on earth
With man or men's affairs, how I begin
To verify that solemn message, late
On which I sent thee to the virgin pure
In Galilee, that she should bear a Son
Great in renown, and called the Son of God;
Then told'st her, doubting how these things could be
To her a virgin, that on her should come

[1] Alluding to the habit of sorcerers and necromancers, who are represented in some prints as girded about the middle with the skins of snakes and serpents.

The Holy Ghost, and the power of the Highest
O'ershadow her: this man born and now up-grown,
To show him worthy of his birth divine
And high prediction, henceforth I expose
To Satan; let him tempt and now assay
His utmost subtlety, because he boasts
And vaunts of his great cunning to the throng
Of his apostacy: he might have learned
Less overweening, since he failed in Job,
Whose constant perseverance overcame
Whate'er his cruel malice could invent.
He now shall know I can produce a man
Of female seed, far abler to resist
All his solicitations, and at length
All his vast force, and drive him back to Hell,
Winning by conquest what the first man lost
By fallacy surprised. But first I mean
To exercise him in the wilderness;
There he shall first lay down the rudiments
Of his great warfare, ere I send him forth
To conquer Sin and Death, the two grand foes,
By humiliation and strong sufferance:
His weakness shall o'ercome Satanic strength,
And all the world, and mass of sinful flesh;
That all the angels and ethereal powers,
They now, and men hereafter, may discern,
From what consummate virtue I have chose
This perfect man, by merit called my Son,
To earn salvation for the sons of men."

So spake the eternal Father, and all Heaven
Admiring stood a space; then into hymns
Burst forth, and in celestial measures moved,
Circling the throne and singing, while the hand
Sung with the voice; and this the argument:

"Victory and triumph to the Son of God
Now entering his great duel,[1] not of arms,
But to vanquish by wisdom hellish wiles.
The father knows the Son; therefore secure
Ventures his filial virtue, though untried,
Against whate'er may tempt, whate'er seduce,
Allure, or terrify, or undermine.

[1] Battle, not necessarily between two parties, but for *duellum*, ant. for *bellum*.

Be frustrate, all ye stratagems of Hell,
And devilish machinations come to nought."
So they in Heaven their odes and vigils tuned:
Meanwhile the Son of God, who yet some days
Lodged in Bethabara where John baptized,
Musing, and much revolving in his breast,
How best the mighty work he might begin
Of Saviour to mankind, and which way first
Publish his Godlike office now mature,
One day forth walked alone, the Spirit leading,
And his deep thoughts, the better to converse
With solitude, till far from track of men,
Thought following thought, and step by step led on,
He entered now the bordering desert wild,
And, with dark shades and rocks environed round,
His holy meditations thus pursued:
"Oh, what a multitude of thoughts at once
Awakened in me swarm, while I consider
What from within I feel myself, and hear
What from without comes often to my ears,
Ill sorting with my present state compared!
When I was yet a child, no childish play
To me was pleasing: all my mind was set
Serious to learn and know, and thence to do
What might be public good; myself I thought
Born to that end, born to promote all truth,
All righteous things: therefore, above my years,
The law of God I read, and found it sweet;
Made it my whole delight; and in it grew
To such perfection, that ere yet my age
Had measured twice six years, at our great feast
I went into the temple, there to hear
The teachers of our law, and to propose
What might improve my knowledge or their own,
And was admired by all. Yet this not all
To which my spirit aspired: victorious deeds
Flamed in my heart, heroic acts; one while
To rescue Israel from the Roman yoke,
Then to subdue and quell o'er all the earth
Brute violence and proud tyrannic power,
Till truth were freed, and equity restored;
Yet held it more humane, more heavenly, first
By winning words to conquer willing hearts,
And make persuasion do the work of fear;

At least to try, and teach the erring soul
Not wilfully misdoing, but unware
Misled; the stubborn only to subdue.
These growing thoughts my mother soon perceiving,
By words at times cast forth, inly rejoiced,
And said to me apart: 'High are thy thoughts,
O son! but nourish them, and let them soar
To what height sacred virtue and true worth
Can raise them, though above example high;
By matchless deeds express thy matchless Sire.
For know, thou art no son of mortal man:
Though men esteem thee low of parentage,
Thy father is the eternal King who rules
All Heaven and earth, angels and sons of men;
A messenger from God foretold thy birth
Conceived in me a virgin; he foretold
Thou shouldst be great, and sit on David's throne,
And of thy kingdom there should be no end.
At thy nativity a glorious quire
Of angels in the fields of Bethlehem sung
To shepherds watching at their folds by night,
And told them the Messiah now was born,
Where they might see him, and to thee they came,
Directed to the manger where thou lay'st,
For in the inn was left no better room:
A star, not seen before, in Heaven appearing,
Guided the wise men thither from the east,
To honour thee with incense, myrrh, and gold,
By whose bright course led on they found the place,
Affirming it thy star new graven in Heaven,
By which they knew the King of Israel born.
Just Simeon and prophetic Anna, warned
By vision, found thee in the temple, and spake,
Before the altar and the vested priest,
Like things of thee to all that present stood.'
"This having heard, straight I again revolved
The law and prophets, searching what was writ
Concerning the Messiah, to our scribes
Known partly, and soon found of whom they spake
I am; this chiefly, that my way must lie
Through many a hard assay even to the death,
Ere I the promised kingdom can attain,
Or work redemption for mankind, whose sins'
Full weight must be transferred upon my head.

Yet neither thus disheartened or dismayed,
The time prefixed I waited, when behold
The Baptist (of whose birth I oft had heard,
Not knew by sight) now come, who was to come
Before Messiah, and his way prepare.
T as all others to his baptism came,
Which I believed was from above; but he
Straight knew me, and with loudest voice proclaimed
Me him (for it was shown him so from Heaven),
Me him whose harbinger he was; and first
Refused on me his baptism to confer,
As much his greater, and was hardly won:
But as I rose out of the laving stream,
Heaven opened her eternal doors, from whence
The Spirit descended on me like a dove,
And last the sum of all, my Father's voice,
Audibly heard from Heaven, pronounced me his,
Me his beloved Son, in whom alone
He was well pleased; by which I knew the time
Now full, that I no more should live obscure,
But openly begin, as best becomes
The authority which I derived from Heaven.
And now by some strong motion I am led
Into this wilderness, to what intent
I learn not yet, perhaps I need not know;
For what concerns my knowledge God reveals."
So spake our Morning Star, then in his rise,
And looking round on every side beheld
A pathless desert, dusk with horrid shades;
The way he came not having marked, return
Was difficult, by human steps untrod;
And he still on was led, but with such thoughts
Accompanied of things past and to come
Lodged in his breast, as well might recommend
Such solitude before choicest society.
Full forty days he passed, whether on hill
Sometimes, anon in shady vale, each night
Under the covert of some ancient oak,
Or cedar, to defend him from the dew,
Or harboured in one cave, is not revealed;
Nor tasted human food, nor hunger felt
Till those days ended, hungered then at last
Among wild beasts: they at his sight grew mild,
Nor sleeping him nor waking harmed; his walk

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PARADISE REGAINED.

Among wild beasts; they at his sight grew mild,
Nor sleeping, him, nor waking harmed.

The fiery serpent fled, and noxious worm,
The lion and fierce tiger glared aloof.
But now an aged man[1] in rural weeds,
Following, as seemed, the quest of some stray ewe,
Or withered sticks to gather, which might serve
Against a winter's day when winds blow keen,
To warm him wet returned from field at eve,
He saw approach, who first with curious eye
Perused him, then with words thus uttered spake:
"Sir, what ill chance hath brought thee to this place,
So far from path or road of men, who pass
In troop or caravan? for single none
Durst ever, who returned, and dropped not here
His carcass, pined with hunger and with drouth
I ask the rather, and the more admire,
For that to me thou seem'st the man, whom late
Our new baptizing prophet at the ford
Of Jordan honoured so, and called thee Son
Of God; I saw and heard, for we sometimes
Who dwell this wild, constrained by want, come forth
To town or village nigh (nighest is far)
Where aught we hear, and curious are to hear,
What happens new; fame also finds us out."
To whom the Son of God: "Who brought me hither,
Will bring me hence; no other guide I seek."
"By miracle he may," replied the swain,
"What other way I see not, for we here
Live on tough roots and stubs,[2] to thirst inured
More than the camel,[3] and to drink go far,
Men to much misery and hardship born:
But if thou be the Son of God, command
That out of these hard stones be made thee bread;

[1] As the Scripture is entirely silent about what personage the tempter assumed, the poet was at liberty to indulge his own fancy; and nothing, I think, could be better conceived for his present purpose, or more likely to prevent suspicion of fraud. The poet might, perhaps, take the hint from a design of David Kirkboon's, where the devil is represented addressing himself to our Saviour, under the appearance of an old man.—*Thyer.*

[2] Although this word is used both by Chaucer and Spenser to signify a stock or clump, still the sense seems to require "shrubs," as is proposed by Thyer.

[3] On the endurance of thirst by the camel, see Plin. H. N. viii, 26. Taverner says that it will ordinarily live without drink eight or nine days.

So shalt thou save thyself and us relieve
With food, whereof we wretched seldom taste."
He ended, and the Son of God replied:
"Think'st thou such force in bread? Is it not written
(For I discern thee other than thou seem'st)
Man lives not by bread only, but each word
Proceeding from the mouth of God, who fed
Our fathers here with manna? In the mount
Moses was forty days, nor ate nor drank;
And forty days Elijah without food
Wandered this barren waste; the same I now:
Why dost thou then suggest to me distrust,
Knowing who I am, as I know who thou art?"
Whom thus answered the arch-fiend now undisguised:
"'Tis true, I am that spirit unfortunate,
Who, leagued with millions more in rash revolt,
Kept not my happy station, but was driven
With them from bliss to the bottomless deep;
Yet to that hideous place not so confined
By rigour unconniving, but that oft
Leaving my dolorous prison I enjoy
Large liberty to round this globe of earth,
Or range in the air, nor from the Heaven of Heavens
Hath he excluded my resort sometimes.
I came among the sons of God, when he
Gave up into my hands Uzzéan Job
To prove him, and illustrate his high worth;
And when to all his angels he proposed
To draw the proud king Ahab into fraud
That he might fall in Ramoth,[1] they demurring,
I undertook that office, and the tongues
Of all his flattering prophets glibbed with lies
To his destruction, as I had in charge;
For what he bids I do. Though I have lost
Much lustre of my native brightness, lost
To be beloved of God, I have not lost
To love, at least contemplate and admire
What I see excellent in good, or fair,
Or virtuous, I should so have lost all sense.
What can be then less in me than desire
To see thee and approach thee, whom I know
Declared the Son of God, to hear attent[2]
Thy wisdom, and behold thy Godlike deeds?

[1] See 1 Kings, xxii. 19, sqq. [2] Attentively.

Men generally think me such a foe
To all mankind: why should I? they to me
Never did wrong or violence; by them
I lost not what I lost, rather by them
I gained what I have gained, and with them dwell
Copartner in these regions of the world,
If not disposer; lend them oft my aid,
Oft my advice by presages and signs,
And answers, oracles, portents, and dreams,
Whereby they may direct their future life.
Envy they say excites me thus to gain
Companions of my misery and woe.
At first it may be; but long since with woe
Nearer acquainted, now I feel by proof,
That fellowship in pain divides not smart,
Nor lightens aught each man's peculiar load.
Small consolation then, were men adjoined:
This wounds me most (what can it less?) that man,
Man fallen shall be restored; I never more."
To whom our Saviour sternly thus replied:
"Deservedly thou griev'st, composed of lies
From the beginning, and in lies wilt end;
Who boast'st release from Hell, and leave to come
Into the Heaven of Heavens. Thou com'st indeed,
As a poor miserable captive thrall
Comes to the place where he before had sat
Among the prime in splendour, now deposed,
Ejected, emptied, gazed, unpitied, shunned,
A spectacle of ruin or of scorn
To all the host of Heaven: the happy place
Imparts to thee no happiness, no joy,
Rather inflames thy torment, representing
Lost bliss to thee no more communicable,
So never more in Hell than when in Heaven.
But thou art serviceable to Heaven's King.
Wilt thou impute to obedience what thy fear
Extorts, or pleasure to do ill excites?
What but thy malice moved thee to misdeem
Of righteous Job, then cruelly to afflict him
With all inflictions? but his patience won.
The other service was thy chosen task,
To be a liar in four hundred mouths:
For lying is thy sustenance, thy food.
Yet thou pretend'st to truth; all oracles

By thee are given, and what confessed more true
Among the nations? that hath been thy craft,
By mixing somewhat true to vent more lies.
But what have been thy answers, what but dark,
Ambiguous, and with double sense deluding,
Which they who asked have seldom understood,
And not well understood as good not known?
Whoever, by consulting at thy shrine,
Returned the wiser, or the more instruct
To fly or follow what concerned him most,
And run not sooner to his fatal snare?
For God hath justly given the nations up
To thy delusions; justly, since they fell
Idolatrous: but when his purpose is
Among them to declare his providence
To thee not known, whence hast thou then thy truth
But from him or his angels president
In every province? who, themselves disdaining
To approach thy temples, give thee in command
What to the smallest tittle thou shalt say
To thy adorers; thou with trembling fear,
Or like a fawning parasite, obey'st;
Then to thyself ascrib'st the truth foretold.
But this thy glory shall be soon retrenched;
No more shalt thou by oracling abuse
The Gentiles: henceforth oracles are ceased,
And thou no more with pomp and sacrifice
Shalt be inquired at Delphos[1] or elsewhere.
At least in vain, for they shall find thee mute.
God hath now sent his living oracle
Into the world to teach his final will,
And sends his Spirit of truth henceforth to dwell
In pious hearts, an inward oracle
To all truth requisite for men to know."
So spake our Saviour; but the subtle fiend,
Though inly stung with anger and disdain,
Dissembled, and this answer smooth returned.
"Sharply thou hast insisted on rebuke,
And urged me hard with doings, which not will
But misery hath wrested from me: where
Easily canst thou find one miserable,
And not enforced oft-times to part from truth;

[1] More rightly "Delphi," but the mistake is a common one.

If it may stand him more in stead to lie,
Say and unsay, feign, flatter, or abjure?
But thou art placed above me, thou art Lord;
From thee I can and must submiss endure
Check or reproof, and glad to 'scape so quit.
Hard are the ways of truth, and rough to walk,
Smooth on the tongue discoursed, pleasing to the ear,
And tuneable as sylvan pipe or song;
What wonder then if I delight to hear
Her dictates from thy mouth? Most men admire
Virtue, who follow not her lore: permit me
To hear thee when I come (since no man comes),
And talk at least, though I despair to attain.
Thy Father, who is holy, wise, and pure,
Suffers the hypocrite or atheous priest
To tread his sacred courts, and minister
About his altar, handling holy things,
Praying or vowing, and vouchsafed his voice
To Balaam reprobate, a prophet yet
Inspired; disdain not such access to me."
To whom our Saviour with unaltered brow:
"Thy coming hither, though I know thy scope,
I bid not or forbid; do as thou find'st
Permission from above; thou canst not more."
He added not; and Satan, bowing low
His gray dissimulation, disappeared
Into thin air diffused: for now began
Night with her sullen wings to double-shade
The desert; fowls in their clay nests were couched;
And now wild beasts came forth the woods to roam.

BOOK II.

Meanwhile the new-baptized, who yet remained
At Jordan with the Baptist, and had seen
Him whom they heard so late expressly called
Jesus Messiah, Son of God declared,[1]

[1] This is a great mistake of the poet. All that the people could collect from the declarations of John the Baptist, and the voice from Heaven, was, that he was a great prophet, and this was all they did in fact collect; they were uncertain whether he was their promised Messiah.—*Warburton.*

And on that high authority had believed,
And with him talked, and with him lodged, I mean
Andrew and Simon, famous after known,
With others, though in holy writ not named,
Now missing him their joy so lately found,
So lately found, and so abruptly gone,
Began to doubt, and doubted many days,
And as the days increased, increased their doubt:
Sometimes they thought he might be only shown,
And for a time caught up to God, as once
Moses was in the mount, and missing long;
And the great Thisbite, who on fiery wheels
Rode up to Heaven, yet once again to come.
Therefore as those young prophets then with care
Sought lost Elijah,[1] so in each place these
Nigh to Bethabara; in Jericho
The city of palms,[2] Ænon, and Salem old,[3]
Machærus,[4] and each town or city walled
On this side the broad lake Genezaret,
Or in Peræa; but returned in vain.
Then on the bank of Jordan, by a creek,
Where winds with reeds and osiers whispering play,
Plain fishermen, no greater men them call,[5]
Close in a cottage low together got,
Their unexpected loss and plaints out-breathed:
"Alas, from what high hope to what relapse
Unlooked for are we fallen! our eyes beheld
Messiah certainly now come, so long
Expected of our fathers; we have heard
His words, his wisdom full of grace and truth;
Now, now, for sure, deliverance is at hand,
The kingdom shall to Israel be restored:
Thus we rejoiced, but soon our joy is turned
Into perplexity and new amaze:
For whither is he gone? what accident
Hath rapt him from us? will he now retire
After appearance, and again prolong
Our expectation? God of Israel,

[1] See 2 Kings ii. 17. [2] Deut. xxxiv. 3.
[3] Milton, probably, takes this for the Salem, of which Melchizedek was king. See, however, Kitto's Cyclop. v. ii. p. 823.
[4] A castle in the mountain district of Peræa.
[5] So, Spenser's Calendar:—
"A shepherd's boy, no better do him call."

Send thy Messiah forth, the time is come;
Behold the kings of the earth how they oppress
Thy chosen, to what height their power unjust
They have exalted, and behind them cast
All fear of thee; arise and vindicate
Thy glory, free thy people from their yoke.
But let us wait; thus far he hath performed,
Sent his Anointed, and to us revealed him,
By his great prophet, pointed at and shown
In public, and with him we have conversed;
Let us be glad of this, and all our fears
Lay on his providence; he will not fail,
Nor will withdraw him now, nor will recall,
Mock us with his blest sight, then snatch him hence
Soon we shall see our hope, our joy return."
Thus they out of their plaints new hope resume
To find whom at the first they found unsought:
But to his mother, Mary, when she saw
Others returned from baptism, not her son,
Nor left at Jordan, tidings of him none,
Within her breast though calm, her breast though pure,
Motherly cares and fears got head, and raised
Some troubled thoughts, which she in sighs thus clad:
" Oh what avails me now that honour high
To have conceived of God, or that salute,
'Hail, highly favoured, among women blest!'
While I to sorrows am no less advanced,
And fears as eminent, above the lot
Of other women, by the birth I bore,
In such a season born when scarce a shed
Could be obtained to shelter him or me
From the bleak air; a stable was our warmth,
A manger his; yet soon enforced to fly
Thence into Egypt, till the murderous king
Were dead, who sought his life, and missing filled
With infant blood the streets of Bethlehem;
From Egypt home returned, in Nazareth
Hath been our dwelling many years; his life
Private, unactive, calm, contemplative,
Little suspicious to any king; but now
Full grown to man, acknowledged, as I hear,
By John the Baptist, and in public shown,
Son owned from Heaven by his Father's voice;
I looked for some great change; to honour? no,

But trouble, as old Simeon plain foretold,
That to the fall and rising he should be
Of many in Israel, and to a sign
Spoken against, that through my very soul
A sword shall pierce: this is my favoured lot,
My exaltation to afflictions high.
Afflicted I may be, it seems, and blest;
I will not argue that, nor will repine.
But where delays he now? some great intent
Conceals him: when twelve years he scarce had seen,
I lost him, but so found, as well I saw
He could not lose himself; but went about
His Father's business; what he meant I mused,
Since understand; much more his absence now
Thus long to some great purpose he obscures.
But I to wait with patience am inured:
My heart hath been a storehouse long of things
And sayings laid up, portending strange events.
Thus Mary pondering oft, and oft to mind
Recalling what remarkably had passed
Since first her salutation heard, with thoughts
Meekly composed awaited the fulfilling:
The while her son tracing the desert wild,
Sole but with holiest meditations fed,
Into himself descended, and at once
All his great work to come before him set;
How to begin, how to accomplish best
His end of being on earth, and mission high:
For Satan, with sly preface to return,
Had left him vacant, and with speed was gone
Up to the middle region of thick air,
Where all his potentates in council sat;
There without sign of boast, or sign of joy,
Solicitous and blank he thus began:
"Princes, Heaven's ancient sons, ethereal thrones,
Demonian spirits now, from the element
Each of his reign allotted, rightlier called
Powers of fire, air, water, and earth beneath,[1]
So may we hold our place, and these mild seats
Without new trouble; such an enemy

[1] The ancients believed that there were demons, visible and invisible, in all parts of the four elements. See, Alcinous, Doctr. Plat. § 5. Mich. Psellus, Dial. de Dæm. p. 41, 45, &c. Apul. de Deo Socr.

Is risen to invade us, who no less
Threatens than our expulsion down to Hell;
I, as I undertook, and with the vote
Consenting in full frequence[1] was empowered,
Have found him, viewed him, tasted him, but find
Far other labour to be undergone
Than when I dealt with Adam first of men,
Though Adam by his wife's allurement fell,
However to this man inferior far,
If he be man[2] by mother's side at least,
With more than human gifts from Heaven adorned,[3]
Perfections absolute, graces divine,
And amplitude of mind to greatest deeds
Therefore I am returned, lest confidence
Of my success with Eve in Paradise
Deceive ye to persuasion over-sure
Of like succeeding here: I summon all
Rather to be in readiness, with hand
Or counsel to assist; lest I who erst
Thought none my equal, now be over-matched."
So spake the old serpent doubting, and from all
With clamour was assured their utmost aid
At his command; when from amidst them rose
Belial, the dissolutest spirit that fell,
The sensualest, and, after Asmodai,
The fleshliest incubus, and thus advised:
"Set women in his eye, and in his walk,
Among daughters of men the fairest found;
Many are in each region passing fair
As the noon sky; more like to goddesses
Than mortal creatures, graceful and discreet,
Expert in amorous arts, enchanting tongues
Persuasive, virgin majesty with mild
And sweet allayed, yet terrible to approach,
Skilled to retire, and in retiring draw
Hearts after them tangled in amorous nets.
Such object hath the power to soften and tame
Severest temper, smooth the rugged'st brow,
Enerve, and with voluptuous hope dissolve,
Draw out with credulous desire, and lead
At will the manliest, resolutest breast,
As the magnetic hardest iron draws.

[1] Assembly. [2] Some would place a comma after *man*.
[3] *i. e. He is* adorned.

Women, when nothing else, beguiled the heart
Of wisest Solomon, and made him build,
And made him bow to the gods of his wives."
To whom quick answer Satan thus returned:
"Belial, in much uneven scale thou weigh'st
All others by thyself; because of old
Thou thyself doat'dst on womankind, admiring
Their shape, their colour, and attractive grace;
None are, thou think'st, but taken[1] with such toys.
Before the flood, thou, with thy lusty crew,
False titled sons of God, roaming the earth,
Cast wanton eyes on the daughters of men,
And coupled with them, and begot a race.
Have we not seen, or by relation heard,
In courts and regal chambers how thou lurk'st,
In wood or grove by mossy fountain side,
In valley or green meadow, to waylay
Some beauty rare, Calisto, Clymene,
Daphne, or Semele, Antiopa,
Or Amymone, Syrinx, many more
Too long, then lay'st thy 'scapes on names adored,
Apollo, Neptune, Jupiter, or Pan,
Satyr, or Faun, or Sylvan? But these haunts
Delight not all; among the sons of men,
How many have with a smile made small account
Of beauty and her lures, easily scorned
All her assaults, on worthier things intent?
Remember that Pellean[2] conqueror,
A youth, how all the beauties of the east
He slightly viewed, and slightly overpassed;
How he surnamed of Africa[3] dismissed
In his prime youth the fair Iberian maid.
For Solomon, he lived at ease, and full
Of honour, wealth, high fare, aimed not beyond
Higher design than to enjoy his state;
Thence to the bait of women lay exposed:
But he whom we attempt is wiser far
Than Solomon, of more exalted mind,

[1] *i. e.*, Thou thinkest there are none who are not taken, *i. e.* who are able to resist.

[2] Alexander the Great, born at Pella, in Macedonia. His continence towards the queen and daughters of Darius, when they were taken prisoners after the battle of Assus, is set forth by Q. Curt. iii. 9.

[3] Scipio Africanus, Liv. xxvi. 50. Valer. Max. iv. 3.

Made and set wholly on the accomplishment
Of greatest things: what woman will you find
Though of this age the wonder and the fame,
On whom his leisure will vouchsafe an eye
Of fond desire? or should she confident,
As sitting queen adored on beauty's throne,
Descend with all her winning charms begirt
To enamour, as the zone of Venus once
Wrought that effect on Jove,[1] so fables tell,
How would one look from his majestic brow
Seated as on the top of virtue's hill,
Discountenance her despised, and put to rout
All her array; her female pride deject,
Or turn to reverent awe? for beauty stands
In the admiration only of weak minds
Led captive; cease to admire, and all her plumes
Fall flat and shrink into a trivial toy,
At every sudden slighting quite abashed;
Therefore, with manlier objects we must try
His constancy, with such as have more show
Of worth, of honour, glory, and popular praise:
Rocks whereon greatest men have oftest wrecked;
Or that which only seems to satisfy
Lawful desires of nature, not beyond;
And now I know he hungers where no food
Is to be found, in the wide wilderness;
The rest commit to me; I shall let pass
No advantage, and his strength as oft assay."
He ceased; and heard their grant in loud acclaim;
Then forthwith to him takes a chosen band
Of spirits likest to himself in guile
To be at hand, and at his beck appear,

[1] Alluding to Homer, Il. xiv., where Juno borrows the girdle of Venus:—

"She said, with awe divine the queen of love
Obeyed the sister and the wife of Jove:
And from her fragrant breast the zone unbraced,
With various skill and high embroidery graced.
In this was every art, and every charm
To win the wisest, and the coldest warm;
Fond love, the gentle vow, the gay desire,
The kind deceit, the still reviving fire;
Persuasive speech, and more persuasive sighs,
Silence that spoke, and eloquence of eyes."—*Pope.*

If cause were to unfold some active scene
Of various persons, each to know his part;
Then to the desert takes with these his flight;
Where still from shade to shade the Son of God,
After forty days' fasting had remained,
Now hungering first, and to himself thus said:
"Where will this end? Four times ten days I've passed
Wandering this woody maze, and human food
Nor tasted, nor had appetite; that fast
To virtue I impute not, or count part
Of what I suffer here: if nature need not,
Or God support nature without repast,
Though needing, what praise is it to endure?
But now I feel I hunger, which declares
Nature hath need of what she asks; yet God
Can satisfy that need some other way,
Though hunger still remain: so it remain
Without this body's wasting, I content me,
And from the sting of famine fear no harm:
Nor mind it, fed with better thoughts that feed
Me hungering more to do my Father's will."
It was the hour of night, when thus the Son
Communed in silent walk, then laid him down
Under the hospitable covert nigh
Of trees thick interwoven; there he slept,
And dreamed as appetite is wont to dream,
Of meats and drinks, nature's refreshment sweet;
Him thought, he by the brook of Cherith stood,
And saw the ravens with their horny beaks
Food to Elijah bringing even and morn,
Though ravenous, taught to abstain from what they [brought
He saw the prophet also how he fled
Into the desert, and how there he slept
Under a juniper; then how, awaked,
He found his supper on the coals prepared,
And by the angel was bid rise and eat,
And eat the second time after repose,
The strength whereof sufficed him forty days;
Sometimes that with Elijah he partook,
Or as[1] a guest with Daniel at his pulse.
Thus wore out night; and now the herald lark
Left his ground-nest, high towering to descry

[1] Sympson would read "*was* a guest."

The morn's approach, and greet her with his song:[1]
As lightly from his grassy couch up rose
Our Saviour, and found all was but a dream;
Fasting he went to sleep, and fasting waked.
Up to a hill anon his steps he reared,
From whose high top to ken the prospect round,
If cottage were in view, sheep-cote, or herd;
But cottage, herd, or sheep-cote none he saw,
Only in a bottom saw a pleasant grove,
With chaunt of tuneful birds resounding loud;
Thither he bent his way, determined there
To rest at noon, and entered soon the shade
High roofed, and walks beneath, and alleys brown,[2]
That opened in the midst a woody scene;
Nature's own work it seemed (nature taught art),
And to a superstitious eye the haunt
Of wood-gods and wood-nymphs; he viewed it round,
When suddenly a man before him stood,
Not rustic as before, but seemlier clad,
As one in city, or court, or palace bred,
And with fair speech these words to him addressed:
"With granted leave officious I return,
But much more wonder that the Son of God
In this wild solitude so long should bide
Of all things destitute, and well I know,
Not without hunger. Others of some note,
As story tells, have trod this wilderness:
The fugitive bond-woman with her son,
Outcast Nebaioth,[3] yet found here relief
By a providing angel; all the race
Of Israel here had famished, had not God
Rained from Heaven manna. and that prophet bold,
Native of Thebez,[4] wandering here was fed

[1] Chaucer, Knight's Tale, 1493—

"The besy larke, the messager of day,
Saleweth in hire song the morwe gray;
And firy Phebus riseth up so bright,
That all the Orient laugeth of the sight."

[2] An Italian expression, cf. Par. Lost, ix. 1088.

[3] A strange substitution of the son's name for that of the father; for, from Gen. xxv. 13, it appears that Nebaioth was the son of Ishmael

[4] *i. e.* Tishbe, or Thisbe, the birthplace of Elijah. I shall not enter into details, but will merely observe that Milton is mistaken (perhaps

Twice by a voice inviting him to eat:
Of thee these forty days none hath regard,
Forty and more deserted here indeed."
To whom thus Jesus: "What conclud'st thou hence?
They all had need; I, as thou seest, have none."
"How hast thou hunger then?" Satan replied.
"Tell me, if food were now before thee set,
Wouldst thou not eat?" "Thereafter as I like
The giver," answered Jesus. "Why should that
Cause thy refusal?" said the subtle fiend.
"Hast thou not right to all created things?
Owe not all creatures by just right to thee
Duty and service, not to stay till bid,
But tender all their power? Nor mention I
Meats by the law unclean, or offered first
To idols, those young Daniel could refuse;
Nor proffered by an enemy, though who
Would scruple that, with want oppressed? Behold,
Nature ashamed, or better to express,
Troubled that thou shouldst hunger, hath purveyed
From all the elements her choicest store
To treat thee as beseems, and as her Lord
With honour; only deign to sit and eat."
He spake no dream, for as his words had end,
Our Saviour lifting up his eyes, beheld
In ample space, under the broadest shade,
A table richly spread,[1] in regal mode,
With dishes piled, and meats of noblest sort
And savour, beasts of chase, or fowl of game,
In pastry built, or from the spit, or boiled,
Gris-amber-steamed;[2] all fish from sea or shore,
Freshet, or purling brook, of shell or fin,
And exquisitest name,[3] for which was drained
Pontus, and Lucrine Bay, and Afric coast.

intentionally) in making the desert in which Hagar wandered, where the Israelites were fed with manna, and where Elijah retreated, the scene of the temptation; such a latitude is, however, quite pardonable.

[1] The following episode in the temptation is due to Milton's imagination. As usual, it labours under his common error of too redundant learning and detail.

[2] A condiment much more common in Queen Elizabeth's time than our own.

[3] The Romans gave the most extravagant names to fish of exquisite taste, such as *cerebrum Jovis*, *clypenus Minervæ*, etc.

Alas! how simple, to these cates compared,
Was that crude apple that diverted Eve,
And at a stately sideboard by the wine
That fragrant smell diffused, in order stood
Tall stripling youths[1] rich clad, of fairer hue
Than Ganymed or Hylas; distant more
Under the trees now tripped, now solemn stood,
Nymphs of Diana's train, and Naiades
With fruits and flowers from Amalthea's horn,
And ladies of the Hesperides, that seemed
Fairer than feigned of old, or fabled since
Of fairy damsels met in forest wide
By knights of Logres, or of Lyones,
Lancelot, or Pelleas, or Pellenore:[2]
And all the while harmonious airs were heard
Of chiming strings, or charming pipes, and winds
Of gentlest gale, Arabian odours fanned
From their soft wings, and Flora's earliest smells.
Such was the splendour; and the tempter now
His invitation earnestly renewed:
"What doubts the Son of God to sit and eat?
These are not fruits forbidden; no interdict
Defends[3] the touching of these viands pure;
Their taste no knowledge works, at least of evil,
But life preserves, destroys life's enemy,
Hunger, with sweet restorative delight.
All these are spirits of air, and woods, and springs,
Thy gentle ministers, who come to pay
Thee homage, and acknowledge thee their Lord:
What doubt'st thou, Son of God? Sit down and eat"
To whom thus Jesus temperately replied:
"Said'st thou not that to all things I had a right?
And who withholds my power that right to use?
Shall I receive by gift what of my own,
When and where likes me best, I can command?
I can at will, doubt not, as soon as thou,
Command a table in this wilderness,
And call swift flights of angels ministrant
Arrayed in glory on my cup to attend:

[1] Milton keeps to the *eastern* character in describing the accoutrements of this banquet.

[2] Here Milton's learning is terribly in advance of his judgment. His taste for exhausting his whole reading, whether apposite or not, does serious mischief.

[3] Forbids.

Why shouldst thou then obtrude this diligence
In vain, where no acceptance it can find?
And with my hunger what hast thou to do?
Thy pompous delicacies I contemn,
And count thy specious gifts no gifts, but guiles."
To whom thus answered Satan malcontent:
"That I have also power to give thou seest;
If of that power I bring thee voluntary
What I might have bestowed on whom I pleased,
And rather opportunely in this place
Chose to impart to thy apparent need;
Why shouldst thou not accept it? But I see
What I can do or offer is suspect;
Of these things others quickly will dispose,
Whose pains have earned the far fet[1] spoil." With that
Both table and provision vanished quite
With sound of harpies' wings,[2] and talons heard;
Only the importune tempter still remained,
And with these words his temptation pursued:
"By hunger, that each other creature tames,
Thou art not to be harmed, therefore not moved,
Thy temperance invincible besides,
For no allurement yields to appetite,
And all thy heart is set on high designs,
High actions; but wherewith to be achieved?
Great acts require great means of enterprise,
Thou art unknown, unfriended, low of birth,
A carpenter thy father known, thyself
Bred up in poverty and straits at home,
Lost in a desert here, and hunger-bit:
Which way or from what hope dost thou aspire
To greatness? whence authority deriv'st?
What followers, what retinue canst thou gain,
Or at thy heels the dizzy multitude,
Longer than thou canst feed them on thy cost?
Money[3] brings honour, friends, conquest, and realms:
What raised Antipater the Edomite,[4]

[1] Fetched.

[2] We have a like scene in Shakspeare, in the Tempest, act iii., where "several strange shapes bring in a banquet," and afterwards "enters Uriel like a harpy, claps his wings upon the table, and with a quaint device the banquet vanishes."—*Newton.*

[3] Compare the similar pretences by which Mammon endeavours to turn aside the virtue of Sir Guyon. Faerie Queen, ii. 7, 11.

[4] Cf. Joseph. Antiq. xiv. 1. & 14.

And his son Herod placed on Judah's throne
(Thy throne), but gold that got him puissant friends?
Therefore, if at great things thou wouldst arrive,
Get riches first, get wealth, and treasure heap.
Not difficult, if thou hearken to me:
Riches are mine; fortune is in my hand;
They whom I favour thrive in wealth amain,
While virtue, valour, wisdom, sit in want."
To whom thus Jesus patiently replied:
"Yet wealth without these three is impotent
To gain dominion, or to keep it gained.
Witness those ancient empires of the earth,
In height of all their flowing wealth dissolved
But men endued with these have oft attained
In lowest poverty to highest deeds:
Gideon[1] and Jephtha,[2] and the shepherd lad,[3]
Whose offspring on the throne of Judah sat
So many ages, and shall yet regain
That seat, and reign in Israel without end.
Among the heathen (for throughout the world
To me is not unknown what hath been done
Worthy of memorial), canst thou not remember
Quintius,[4] Fabricius,[5] Curius,[6] Regulus?
For I esteem those names of men so poor
Who could do mighty things, and could contemn
Riches though offered from the hand of kings.
And what in me seems wanting, but that I
May also in this poverty as soon
Accomplish what they did, perhaps, and more?
Extol not riches, then, the toil of fools,
The wise man's cumbrance if not snare, more apt
To slacken virtue, and abate her edge,
Than prompt her to do aught may merit praise
What if with like aversion I reject
Riches and realms; yet not for that a crown,

[1] Judg. vi. 15. [2] *ib.* xi. 1. [3] Ps. lxviii. 70, sq.
[4] *i. e.* Quintius Cincinnatus.
[5] Fabricius, who withstood the large offers of King Pyrrhus to aid him in negotiating peace with the Romans, died so poor, that he was buried at the public expense.
[6] Curius Dentatus refused the lands assigned him as the reward of his victories; and when the ambassadors of the Samnites offered him a large sum of money, as he sat roasting turnips at the fire, he refused it, declaring that he desired not to be rich, but to command those that were so.

Golden in show, is but a wreath of thorns,
Brings dangers, troubles, cares, and sleepless nights
To him who wears the regal diadem,
When on his shoulders each man's burden lies;
For therein stands the office of a king,
His honour, virtue, merit, and chief praise,
That for the public all this weight he bears.
Yet he who reigns within himself, and rules
Passions, desires, and fears, is more a king;
Which every wise and virtuous man attains:
And who attains not, ill aspires to rule
Cities of men, or headstrong multitudes,
Subject himself to anarchy within,
Or lawless passions in him which he serves
But to guide nations in the way of truth
By saving doctrine, and from error lead
To know, and knowing worship God aright,
Is yet more kingly; this attracts the soul,
Governs the inner man, the nobler part;
That other o'er the body only reigns,
And oft by force, which to a generous mind
So reigning can be no sincere delight.
Besides, to give a kingdom hath been thought
Greater and nobler done, and to lay down
Far more magnanimous than to assume.
Riches are needless, then, both for themselves,
And for thy reason why they should be sought,
To gain a sceptre, oftest better missed."

BOOK III.

So spake the Son of God, and Satan stood
A while as mute, confounded what to say,
What to reply, confuted and convinced
Of his weak arguing, and fallacious drift;
At length, collecting all his serpent wiles,
With soothing words renewed, him thus accosts:
"I see thou know'st what is of use to know,
What best to say canst say, to do canst do;

Thy actions to thy words accord, thy words
To thy large heart give utterance due, thy heart
Contains of good, wise, just, the perfect shape.
Should kings and nations from thy mouth consult,
Thy council would be as the oracle
Urim and Thummim, those oraculous gems
On Aaron's breast; or tongue of seers old
Infallible: or wert thou sought to deeds
That might require the array of war, thy skill
Of conduct would be such, that all the world
Could not sustain thy prowess, or subsist
In battle, though against thy few in arms.
These godlike virtues wherefore dost thou hide,
Affecting private life, or more obscure
In savage wilderness? Wherefore deprive
All earth her wonder at thy acts, thyself
The fame and glory, glory the reward
That sole excites to high attempts, the flame
Of most erected spirits, most tempered pure
Ethereal, who all pleasures else despise,
All treasures and all gain esteem as dross,
And dignities and powers all but the highest?
Thy years are ripe, and over-ripe; the son
Of Macedonian Philip had ere these
Won Asia, and the throne of Cyrus held
At his dispose; young Scipio[1] had brought down
The Carthaginian pride; young Pompey[2] quelled
The Pontic king, and in triumph had rode.
Yet years, and to ripe years judgment mature,
Quench not the thirst of glory, but augment.
Great Julius, whom now all the world admires,
The more he grew in years, the more inflamed
With glory, wept that he had lived so long
Inglorious:[3] but thou yet art not too late."
To whom our Saviour calmly thus replied:
" Thou neither dost persuade me to seek wealt
For empire's sake, nor empire to affect
For glory's sake, by all thy argument.

[1] Scipio was only twenty-four years old when he was sent as Proconsul into Spain, and only between twenty-eight and twenty-nine, when he was chosen Consul before the usual age, and transferred the war to Africa.

[2] But Pompey was above forty, when he was sent against Mithridates.

[3] See Sueton. Jul. Cæs § 7.

For what is glory but the blaze of fame,
The people's praise, if always praise unmixed?
And what the people but a herd confused,
A miscellaneous rabble, who extol
Things vulgar and, well weighed, scarce worth the praise?
They praise, and they admire they know not what,
And know not whom, but as one leads the other;
And what delight to be by such extolled,
To live upon their tongues and be their talk,
Of whom to be dispraised were no small praise,
His lot who dares be singularly good?
The intelligent among them and the wise
Are few, and glory scarce of few is raised.
This is true glory and renown, when God,
Looking on the earth, with approbation marks
The just man, and divulges him through Heaven
To all his angels, who with true applause
Recount his praises: thus he did to Job,
When, to extend his fame through Heaven and earth,
As thou to thy reproach mayst well remember,
He asked thee, 'Hast thou seen my servant Job?'
Famous he was in Heaven, on earth less known;
Where glory is false glory, attributed
To things not glorious, men not worthy of fame
They err who count it glorious to subdue
By conquest far and wide, to over-run
Large countries, and in fields great battles win,
Great cities by assault: what do these worthies,
But rob and spoil, burn, slaughter, and enslave
Peaceable nations, neighbouring, or remote,
Made captive, yet deserving freedom more
Than those their conquerors, who leave behind
Nothing but ruin wheresoe'er they rove,
And all the flourishing works of peace destroy,
Then swell with pride, and must be titled gods,
Great benefactors of mankind, deliverers,
Worshipped with temple, priest, and sacrifice;
One is the son of Jove, of Mars the other;
Till conqueror Death discover them scarce men,
Rolling in brutish vices, and deformed,
Violent or shameful death their due reward.
But if there be in glory aught of good,
It may by means far different be attained
Without ambition, war, or violence;

By deeds of peace, by wisdom eminent,
By patience, temperance: I mention still
Him whom thy wrongs with saintly patience borne
Made famous in a land and times obscure.
Who names not now with honour patient Job?
Poor Socrates (who next more memorable?)
By what he taught and suffered for so doing,
For truth's sake suffering death unjust, lives now
Equal in fame to proudest conquerors.
Yet if for fame and glory aught be done,
Aught suffered; if young African[1] for fame
His wasted country freed from Punic rage,
The deed becomes unpraised, the man at least,
And loses, though but verbal, his reward.
Shall I seek glory, then, as vain men seek,
Oft not deserved? I seek not mine, but his
Who sent me, and thereby witness whence I am."

To whom the tempter murmuring thus replied:
"Think not so slight of glory; therein least
Resembling thy great Father: he seeks glory,
And for his glory all things made, all things
Orders and governs; nor content in Heaven
By all his angels glorified, requires
Glory from men, from all men, good or bad,
Wise or unwise, no difference, no exemption,
Above all sacrifice or hallowed gift
Glory he requires, and glory he receives
Promiscuous from all nations, Jew, or Greek,
Or barbarous, nor exception hath declared;
From us, his foes pronounced, glory he exacts."

To whom our Saviour fervently replied:
"And reason; since his word all things produced,
Though chiefly not for glory as prime end,
But to show forth his goodness, and impart
His good communicable to every soul
Freely; of whom what could he less expect
Than glory and benediction, that is, thanks,
The slightest, easiest, readiest recompense
From them who could return him nothing else,
And, not returning that, would likeliest render
Contempt instead, dishonour, obloquy?
Hard recompense, unsuitable return
For so much good, so much beneficence

[1] *i. e.* Scipio Africanus.

But why should man seek glory, who of his own
Hath nothing, and to whom nothing belongs
But condemnation, ignominy, and shame?
Who for so many benefits received
Turned recreant to God, ingrate and false,
And so of all true good himself despoiled;
Yet, sacrilegious, to himself would take
That which to God alone of right belongs;
Yet so much bounty is in God, such grace,
That who advance his glory, not their own,
Them he himself to glory will advance."
So spake the son of God: and here again
Satan had not to answer, but stood struck
With guilt of his own sin, for he himself
Insatiable of glory had lost all;
Yet of another plea bethought him soon:
"Of glory, as thou wilt," said he, "so deem,
Worth or not worth the seeking, let it pass:
But to a kingdom thou art born, ordained
To sit upon thy father David's throne;
By mother's side thy father; though thy right
Be now in powerful hands, that will not part
Easily from possession won with arms:
Judea now, and all the promised land,
Reduced a province under Roman yoke,
Obeys Tiberius; nor is always ruled
With temperate sway; oft have they violated
The temple, oft the law with foul affronts,
Abominations rather, as did once
Antiochus: and think'st thou to regain
Thy right by sitting still or thus retiring?
So did not Maccabeus: he indeed
Retired unto the desert, but with arms;
And o'er a mighty king so oft prevailed,
That, by strong hand, his family obtained,
Though priests, the crown, and David's throne usurped,
With Modin[1] and her suburbs once content.
If kingdom move thee not, let move thee zeal
And duty; zeal and duty are not slow;
But on occasion's forelock watchful wait.
They themselves rather are occasion best,
Zeal of thy Father's house, duty to free
Thy country from her heathen servitude;

[1] The original country of the Maccabees.

So shalt thou best fulfil, best verify
The prophets old, who sung thy endless reign;
The happier reign the sooner it begins:
Reign then; what canst thou better do the while?"
To whom our Saviour answer thus returned:
"All things are best fulfilled in their due time,
And time there is for all things, Truth hath said:
If of my reign prophetic writ hath told,
That it shall never end, so when begin
The Father in his purpose hath decreed,
He in whose hand all times and seasons roll
What if he hath decreed that I shall first
Be tried in humble state, and things adverse,
By tribulations, injuries, insults,
Contempts, and scorns, and snares, and violence,
Suffering, abstaining, quietly expecting,
Without distrust or doubt, that he may know
What I can suffer, how obey? Who best
Can suffer, best can do; best reign, who first
Well hath obeyed;[1] just trial ere I merit
My exaltation without change or end.
But what concerns it thee when I begin
My everlasting kingdom? why art thou
Solicitous? what moves thy inquisition?
Know'st thou not that my rising is thy fall,
And my promotion will be thy destruction?"
To whom the tempter, inly racked, replied:
"Let that come when it comes; all hope is lost
Of my reception into grace; what worse?
For where no hope is left, is left no fear:
If there be worse, the expectation more
Of worse torments me than the feeling can.
I would be at the worst; worst is my port,
My harbour, and my ultimate repose,
The end I would attain, my final good.
My error was my error, and my crime
My crime; whatever for itself condemned,[2]
And will alike be punished, whether thou
Reign or reign not; though to that gentle brow
Willingly I could fly, and hope thy reign,

[1] Cicero de Legg. iii. :— 2. "Qui bene imperat, parverit aliquando necesse est; et qui modeste paret, videtur, qui aliquando imperet, digne esse."

[2] i. e. whatever it be, it is for itself condemned, &c.

From that placid aspéct and meek regard,
Rather than aggravate my evil state,
Would stand between me and thy Father's ire
(Whose ire I dread more than the fire of Hell),
A shelter and a kind of shading cool
Interposition, as a summér's cloud.
If I then to the worst that can be haste,
Why move thy feet so slow to what is best,
Happiest both to thyself and all the world,
That thou who worthiest art shouldst be their king?
Perhaps thou linger'st in deep thoughts detained
Of the enterprise so hazardous and high;
No wonder, for though in thee be united
What of perfection can in man be found,
Or human nature can receive, consider
Thy life hath yet been private, most part spent
At home, scarce viewed the Galilean towns,
And once a year Jerusalem, few days'
Short sojourn; and what thence couldst thou observe?
The world thou hast not seen, much less her glory,
Empires, and monarchs, and their radiant courts,
Best school of best experience, quickest insight
In all things that to greatest actions lead.
The wisest, unexperienced, will be ever
Timorous and loth, with novice modesty
(As he who, seeking asses, found a kingdom),
Irresolute, unhardy, unadventurous:
But I will bring thee where thou soon shalt quit
Those rudiments, and see before thine eyes
The monarchies of the earth, their pomp and state.
Sufficient introduction to inform
Thee, of thyself so apt, in regal arts,
And regal mysteries, that thou mayst know
How best their opposition to withstand."
With that (such power was given him then) he took
The Son of God up to a mountain high.
It was a mountain[1] at whose verdant feet
A spacious plain, out-stretched in circuit wide,
Lay pleasant; from his side two rivers flowed,
The one winding, the other straight, and left between
Fair champain, with less rivers interveined,

[1] The Scriptures are silent as to the name of the mountain; but Milton, probably, had Taurus in view; the two rivers being the Euphrates and Tigris.—See *Newton*.

Then meeting, joined their tribute to the sea:
Fertile of corn the glebe, of oil, and wine;
With herds the pastures thronged, with flocks the hills,
Huge cities and high-towered, that well might seem
The seats of mightiest monarchs, and so large
The prospect was, that here and there was room
For barren desert fountainless and dry.
To this high mountain-top the tempter brought
Our Saviour, and new train of words began:
"Well have we speeded, and o'er hill and dale,
Forest, and field, and flood, temples and towers,
Cut shorter many a league; here thou behold'st
Assyria and her empire's ancient bounds,
Araxes and the Caspian lake, thence on
As far as Indus east, Euphrates west,
And oft beyond; to south the Persian bay,
And inaccessible the Arabian drouth:
Here Nineveh, of length within her wall
Several days' journey, built by Ninus old,
Of that first golden monarchy the seat,
And seat of Salmanassar, whose success
Israel in long captivity still mourns;
There Babylon, the wonder of all tongues,
As ancient, but rebuilt by him[1] who twice
Judah and all thy father David's house
Led captive, and Jerusalem laid waste,
Till Cyrus set them free; Persepolis
His city there thou seest, and Bactra there;
Ecbatana her structure vast there shows,
And Hecatompylos[2] her hundred gates;
There Susa by Choaspes, amber stream,
The drink of none but kings:[3] of later fame
Built by Emathian[4] or by Parthian hands,
The great Seleucia, Nisibis,[5] and there
Artaxata, Teredon,[6] Ctesiphon,

[1] Nebuchadnezzar, who led the Jews captive twice, first in the reign of Jehoiachin, and afterwards in that of Zedekiah.

[2] A name applied to the capital of Parthia, from the number of her gates.

[3] See the curious dissertation of Jortin, in Newton's edition, and the Universal History, v. 5, p. 124, ed. 8vo.

[4] *i. e.* Macedonian, viz., by the successors of Alexander the Great.

[5] Called also Antiochus.

[6] A city near the Persian Bay, below the confluence of the Euphrates and the Tigris.

Turning with easy eye thou mayst behold.
All these the Parthian, now some ages past,
By great Arsaces[1] led, who founded first
That empire, under his dominion holds,
From the luxurious kings of Antioch won.
And just in time thou com'st to have a view
Of his great power; for now the Parthian king
In Ctesiphon hath gathered all his host
Against the Scythian, whose incursions wild
Have wasted Sogdiana; to her aid
He marches now in haste: see, though from far,
His thousands, in what martial equipage
They issue forth, steel bows, and shafts their arms
Of equal dread in flight, or in pursuit;
All horsemen, in which fight they most excel;
See how in warlike muster they appear,
In rhombs and wedges, and half-moons, and wings."
He looked, and saw what numbers numberless
The city gates out-poured, light armèd troops
In coats of mail and military pride;
In mail their horses clad, yet fleet and strong,
Prancing their riders bore, the flower and choice
Of many provinces from bound to bound;
From Arachosia,[2] from Candaor east,
And Margiana to the Hyrcanian cliffs
Of Caucasus, and dark Iberian dales,
From Atropatia[3] and the neighbouring plains
Of Adiabene, Media, and the south
Of Susiana, to Balsara's haven.[4]
He saw them in their forms of battle ranged,
How quick they wheeled, and flying behind them shot
Sharp sleet of arrowy showers against the face
Of their pursuers, and overcame by flight;
The field all iron cast a gleaming brown:
Nor wanted clouds of foot, nor on each horn
Cuirassiers all in steel for standing fight,
Chariots or elephants indorsed with towers[5]
Of archers, nor of labouring pioneers

[1] His revolt is placed by Prideaux 250 B. C. It may be observed, that there is a serious anachronism in our Saviour being here made to behold cities, long since ruined, in a flourishing condition.
[2] Near the Indus. [3] West of Media. [4] The same as Teredon.
[5] *i. e.* with towers upon their backs. Milton here uses *indorsed* according to its strict derivative meaning, from *in* and *dorsum*.

A multitude with spades and axes armed,
To lay hills plain, fell woods, or valleys fill,
Or where plain was raise hill, or overlay
With bridges rivers proud, as with a yoke:
Mules after these, camels and dromedaries,
And waggons fraught with utensils of war.
Such forces met not, nor so wide a camp,
When Agrican,[1] with all his northern powers,
Besieged Albracca, as romances tell,
The city of Gallaphrone, from thence to win
The fairest of her sex, Angelica
His daughter, sought by many prowest knights,
Both Paynim, and the peers of Charlemain.
Such and so numerous was their chivalry:
At sight whereof the fiend yet more presumed,
And to our Saviour thus his words renewed:
"That thou mayst know I seek not to engage
Thy virtue, and not every way secure
On no slight grounds thy safety; hear, and mark
To what end I have brought thee hither, and shown
All this fair sight: thy kingdom, though foretold
By prophet or by angel, unless thou
Endeavour, as thy father David did,
Thou never shalt obtain: prediction still
In all things, and all men, supposes means;
Without means used, what it predicts revokes.
But say thou wert possessed of David's throne
By free consent of all, none opposite,
Samaritan or Jew; how couldst thou hope
Long to enjoy it quiet and secure,
Between too such enclosing enemies,
Roman and Parthian? Therefore one of these
Thou must make sure thy own: the Parthian first,
By my advice, as nearer, and of late
Found able by invasion to annoy
Thy country, and captive lead away her kings,

[1] See Boiardo's Orlando Inamorat. i. 10. "It must, I think," observes Thyer, "be acknowledged by the greatest admirers of Milton, that the impression which romances had made upon his imagination in his youth, has in this place led him into a blameable excess. Not to mention the notorious fabulousness of the fact alluded to, which I doubt some people will censure in a poem of so grave a turn, the number of the troops of Agrican, &c., is by far too much disproportioned to any army which the Parthian king by any historical evidence, could be supposed to bring into the field."

Antigonus and old Hyrcanus, bound,
Maugre the Roman: it shall be my task
To render thee the Parthian at dispose;
Choose which thou wilt. by conquest or by league
By him thou shalt regain, without him not,
That which alone can truly reinstal thee
In David's royal seat, his true successor,
Deliverance of thy brethren, those ten tribes
Whose offspring in his territory yet serve,
In Habor,[1] and among the Medes dispersed;
Ten sons of Jacob, two of Joseph, lost
Thus long from Israel, serving as of old
Their fathers in the land of Egypt served,
This offer sets before thee to deliver.
These if from servitude thou shalt restore
To their inheritance, then, nor till then,
Thou on the throne of David in full glory,
From Egypt to Euphrates, and beyond,
Shalt reign, and Rome or Cæsar not need fear"
To whom our Saviour answered thus unmoved·
"Much ostentation vain of fleshly arm,
And frugile arms, much instrument of war
Long in preparing, soon to nothing brought,
Before mine eyes thou hast set; and in my ear
Vented much policy, and projects deep
Of enemies, of aids, battles, and leagues,
Plausible to the world, to me worth nought
Means I must use, thou say'st, prediction else
Will unpredict and fail me of the throne:
My time, I told thee (and that time for thee
Were better farthest off), is not yet come;
When that comes, think not thou to find me slack
On my part aught endeavouring, or to need
Thy politic maxims, or that cumbersome
Luggage of war there shown me, argument
Of human weakness rather than of strength.
My brethren, as thou call'st them, those ten tribes
I must deliver, if I mean to reign
David's true heir, and his full sceptre sway
To just extent over all Israel's sons.
But whence to thee this zeal? Where was it then
For Israel, or for David, or his throne,
When thou stood'st up his tempter to the pride

[1] 2 Kings xviii. 11.

Of numbering Israel, which cost the lives
Of threescore and ten thousand Israelites
By three days' pestilence? Such was thy zeal
To Israel then, the same that now to me.
As for those captive tribes, themselves were they
Who wrought their own captivity; fell off
From God to worship calves, the deities
Of Egypt; Baal next, and Ashtaroth,
And all the idolatries of heathen round,
Besides their other worse than heathenish crimes;
Nor in the land of their captivity
Humbled themselves, or penitent besought
The God of their forefathers; but so died
Impenitent, and left a race behind
Like to themselves, distinguishable scarce
From Gentiles, but by circumcision vain,
And God with idols in their worship joined.
Should I of these the liberty regard,
Who, freed, as to their ancient patrimony,
Unhumbled, unrepentant, unreformed,
Headlong would follow;[1] and to their gods, perhaps
Of Bethel and of Dan? No, let them serve
Their enemies, who serve idols with God.
Yet he at length, time to himself best known,
Remembering Abraham, by some wondrous call
May bring them back repentant and sincere,
And at their passing cleave the Assyrian flood,
While to their native land with joy they haste,
As the Red Sea and Jordan once he cleft,
When to the promised land their fathers passed:
To his due time and providence I leave them."
So spake Israel's true king, and to the fiend
Made answer meet, that made void all his wiles.
So fares it when with truth falsehood contends.

BOOK IV.

Perplexed and troubled at his bad success,
The tempter stood, nor had what to reply;

[1] There is great difficulty in this passage, unless the construction be "Headlong would follow as to their ancient patrimony, and to their gods, perhaps."

Discovered in his fraud, thrown from his hope
So oft, and the persuasive rhetoric
That sleeked his tongue, and won so much on Eve,
So little here, nay lost; but Eve was Eve,
This far his over-match, who, self-deceived
And rash, beforehand had no better weighed
The strength he was to cope with, or his own;
But as a man who had been matchless held
In cunning, over-reached where least he thought,
To salve his credit, and for very spite,
Still will be tempting him who foils him still,
And never cease, though to his shame the more;
Or as a swarm of flies in vintage time,
About the wine-press where sweet must is poured,
Beat off, returns as oft with humming sound;
Or surging waves against a solid rock,
Though all to shivers dashed, the assault renew,
Vain battery, and in froth or bubbles end;
So Satan, whom repulse upon repulse
Met ever, and to shameful silence brought,
Yet gives not o'er, though desperate of success,
And his vain importunity pursues.
He brought our Saviour to the western side
Of that high mountain, whence he might behold
Another plain,[1] long, but in breadth not wide,
Washed by the southern sea, and on the north
To equal length backed with a ridge of hills,
That screened the fruits of the earth and seats of men
From cold septentrion[2] blasts; thence in the midst
Divided by a river, of whose banks
On each side an imperial city stood,
With towers and temples proudly elevate
On seven small hills, with palaces adorned,
Porches and theatres, baths, aqueducts,
Statues and trophies, and triumphal arcs,
Gardens and groves, presented to his eyes,
Above the height of mountains interposed;
By what strange parallax, or optic skill
Of vision multiplied through air, or glass
Of telescope, were curious to inquire;
And now the tempter thus his silence broke:

[1] Italy, which is washed by the Mediterranean on the south, and screened by the Northern Alps on the north, and divided in the midst by the river Tiber. [2] Northern.

" The city which thou seest no other deem
Than great and glorious Rome, queen of the earth
So far renowned, and with the spoils enriched
Of nations; there the capitol thou seest
Above the rest lifting his stately head
On the Tarpeian rock, her citadel
Impregnable, and there Mount Palatine,
The imperial palace, compass huge, and high
The structure, skill of noblest architects,
With gilded battlements, conspicuous far,
Turrets and terraces, and glittering spires.
Many a fair edifice besides, more like
Houses of gods (so well I have disposed
My airy microscope), thou mayst behold
Outside and inside both, pillars and roofs,
Carved work, the hand[1] of famed artificers
In cedar, marble, ivory, or gold.
Thence to the gates cast round thine eye, and see
What conflux issuing forth, or entering in:
Prætors, proconsuls to their provinces
Hasting, or on return, in robes of state;
Lictors and rods, the ensigns of their power,
Legions and cohorts, turms[2] of horse and wings:
Or embassies from regions far remote
In various habits on the Appian[3] road,
Or on the Emilian, some from farthest south,
Syene, and where the shadow both way falls,
Meroe, Nilotic isle, and more to west,
The realm of Bocchus[4] to the Black-moor sea,
From the Asian kings, and Parthian among these,
From India and the golden Chersonese,
And utmost Indian isle, Taprobane,
Dusk faces with white silken turbans wreathed,
From Gallia, Gades, and the British west,
Germans and Scythians, and Sarmatians north
Beyond Danubius to the Tauric pool.[5]
All nations now to Rome obedience pay,
To Rome's great emperor, whose wide domain
In ample territory, wealth and power,

[1] Handywork, a Latinism, as in Virg. Æn. i. 455.
[2] Troops, the Latin *turmæ*.
[3] The Appian road from Rome led towards the S., the Emilian towards the N. of Italy.
[4] Mauritania
[5] The Palus Mæotis.

Civility of manners, arts and arms,
And long renown, thou justly mayst prefer
Before the Parthian; these two thrones except,
The rest are barbarous, and scarce worth the sight,
Shared among petty kings too far removed;
These having shown thee, I have shown thee all
The kingdoms of the world, and all their glory.
This emperor[1] hath no son, and now is old,
Old and lascivious, and from Rome retired
To Capreæ, an island small but strong
On the Campanian shore, with purpose there
His horrid lusts in private to enjoy,
Committing to a wicked favourite[2]
All public cares, and yet of him suspicious,
Hated of all, and hating; with what ease,
Endued with regal virtues as thou art,
Appearing, and beginning noble deeds,
Mightst thou expel this monster from his throne
Now made a sty, and, in his place ascending,
A victor people free from servile yoke?
And with my help thou mayst; to me the power
Is given, and by that right I give it thee.
Aim therefore at no less than all the world,
Aim at the highest, without the highest attained
Will be for thee no sitting, or not long,
On David's throne, be prophesied what will."
To whom the Son of God unmoved replied:
"Nor doth this grandeur and majestic show
Of luxury, though called magnificence,
More than of arms before, allure mine eye,
Much less my mind; though thou shouldst add to tell
Their sumptuous gluttonies, and gorgeous feasts
On citron tables,[3] or Atlantic stone
(For I have also heard, perhaps have read),
Their wines of Setia, Cales, and Falerne,
Chios, and Crete,[4] and how they quaff in gold,
Crystal, and myrrhine[5] cups, embossed with gems

[1] Tiberius Nero. This account is strictly conformable to history.
[2] Sejanus.
[3] Citron-wood tables were in such request among the Romans, that Pliny calls it *mensarum insania*, see Hist. Nat. xiii. 29.
[4] The three former wines were Italian; the two latter Greek.
[5] These kind of cups are constantly mentioned together, Pliny xxxiii. 2; *vechious myrrhine*, cups among fossils.

And studs of pearl, to me shouldst tell who thirst
And hunger still. Then embassies thou show'st
From nations far and nigh: what honour that,
But tedious waste of time to sit and hear
So many hollow compliments and lies,
Outlandish flatteries? Then proceed'st to talk
Of the emperor, how easily subdued,
How gloriously; I shall, thou say'st, expel
A brutish monster: what if I withal
Expel a devil who first made him such?
Let his tormentor conscience find him out;
For him I was not sent, nor yet to free
That people victor once, now vile and base,
Deservedly made vassal, who once just,
Frugal, and mild, and temperate, conquered well,
But govern ill the nations under yoke,
Peeling their provinces, exhausted all
By lust and rapine; first ambitious grown
Of triumph, that insulting vanity;
Then cruel, by their sports to blood inured
Of fighting beasts, and men to beasts exposed,
Luxurious by their wealth, and greedier still,
And from the daily scene effeminate.
What wise and valiant man would seek to free
These thus degenerate, by themselves enslaved,
Or could of inward slaves make outward free?
Know, therefore, when my season comes to sit
On David's throne, it shall be like a tree
Spreading and overshadowing all the earth,
Or as a stone that shall to pieces dash
All monarchies besides throughout the world,
And of my kingdom there shall be no end:
Means there shall be to this, but what the means,
Is not for thee to know, nor me to tell."

To whom the tempter impudent replied:
"I see all offers made by me how slight
Thou valuest, because offered, and reject'st:
Nothing will please the difficult and nice,
Or nothing more than still to contradict:
On the other side know also thou, that I
On what I offer set as high esteem,
Nor what I part with mean to give for nought;
All these which in a moment thou behold'st,
The kingdoms of the world to thee I give;

For given to me, I give to whom I please,
No trifle; yet with this reserve, not else,
On this condition,[1] if thou wilt fall down,
And worship me as thy superior lord,
Easily done, and hold them all of me;
For what can less so great a gift deserve?"
Whom thus our Saviour answered with disdain:
"I never liked thy talk, thy offers less,
Now both abhor, since thou hast dared to utter
The abominable terms, impious condition;
But I endure the time, till which expired,
Thou hast permission on me. It is written
The first of all commandments, 'Thou shalt worship
The Lord thy God, and only him shalt serve;'
And dar'st thou to the Son of God propound
To worship thee, accursed, now more accursed
For this attempt bolder than that on Eve,
And more blasphémous? which expect to rue
The kingdoms of the world to thee were given,
Permitted rather, and by thee usurped;
Other donation none thou canst produce:
If given, by whom but by the King of Kings,
God over all supreme? If given to thee,
By thee how fairly is the giver now
Repaid? But gratitude in thee is lost
Long since. Wert thou so void of fear or shame,
As offer them to me, the Son of God,
To me my own on such abhorréd pact,[2]
That I fall down and worship thee as God?
Get thee behind me; plain thou now appear'st
That evil one, Satan for ever damned."
To whom the fiend with fear abashed replied:
"Be not so sore offended, Son of God,
Though sons of God both angels are and men,
If I to try whether in higher sort
Than these thou bear'st that title, have proposed

[1] "In my opinion," says Bishop Newton (and with good reason), "there is not anything in the disposition and conduct of the whole poem so justly liable to censure as the awkward and preposterous introduction of this incident in this place. The tempter should have proposed the condition at the same time that he offered the gifts, as he does likewise in Scripture; but, after his gifts had been absolutely refused, to what purpose was it to propose the 'impious condition'"

[2] Treaty, agreement.

What both from men and angels I receive,
Tetrarchs of fire, air, flood, and on the earth
Nations besides from all the quartered winds,
God of this world invoked and world beneath;
Who then thou art, whose coming is foretold
To me so fatal, me it most concerns.
The trial hath endamaged thee no way,
Rather more honour left and more esteem;
Me nought advantaged, missing what I aimed.
Therefore let pass, as they are transitory,
The kingdoms of this world; I shall no more
Advise thee; gain them as thou canst, or not.
And thou thyself seem'st otherwise inclined
Than to a worldy crown, addicted more
To contemplation and profound dispute,
As by that early action may be judged,
When slipping from thy mother's eye thou went'st
Alone into the temple, there wast found
Among the gravest rabbis disputant
On points and questions fitting Moses' chair,
Teaching, not taught; the childhood shows the man,
As morning shows the day. Be famous then
By wisdom; as thy empire must extend,
So let extend thy mind o'er all the world
In knowledge, all things in it comprehend:
All knowledge is not couched in Moses' law,
The Pentateuch, or what the prophets wrote:
The Gentiles also know, and write and teach
To admiration, led by nature's light;
And with the Gentiles much thou must converse,
Ruling them by persuasion as thou mean'st;
Without their learning how wilt thou with them,
Or they with thee, hold conversation meet?
How wilt thou reason with them, how refute
Their idolisms, traditions, paradoxes?
Error by his own arms is best evinced.
Look once more ere we leave this specular mount[1]
Westward, much nearer by south-west, behold
Where on the Ægean shore a city stands
Built nobly, pure the air, and light the soil;
Athens, the eye of Greece, mother of arts
And eloquence, native to famous wits

[1] Like "mount of speculation" in Par. Lost, xii. 588.

Or hospitable, in her sweet recess,
City or suburban, studious walks and shades;
See there the olive grove of Academe,[1]
Plato's retirement, where the Attic bird[2]
Trills her thick-warbled notes the summer long;
There flowery hill Hymettus, with the sound
Of bees' industrious murmur, oft invites
To studious musing; there Ilissus rolls
His whispering stream: within the walls then view
The schools of ancient sages; his who bred
Great Alexander to subdue the world,
Lyceum[3] there, and painted Stoa[4] next:
There thou shalt hear and learn the secret power
Of harmony in tones and numbers hit
By voice or hand, and various-measured verse,
Æolian charms and Dorian lyric odes,
And his who gave them breath, but higher sung,
Blind Melesigenes,[5] thence Homer called,
Whose poem Phœbus challenged for his own.
Thence what the lofty grave tragedians taught
In chorus or iambic, teachers best
Of moral prudence, with delight received
In brief sententious precepts, while they treat
Of fate and chance, and change in human life,
High actions and high passions best describing.
Thence to the famous orators repair,
Those ancient, whose resistless eloquence
Wielded at will that fierce democratie,
Shook the arsenal, and fulmined over Greece
To Macedon[6] and Artaxerxes' throne.
To sage philosophy next lend thine ear,

[1] A favourite resort for the students and philosophers of Athens, taking its name from an ancient hero. Cf. Aristoph. Ran. iii. 3; Hor. Ep. ii. 2, 45.

[2] The nightingale, into which Philomela, the daughter of Pandion, king of Athens, is fabled to have been changed. Cf. Mart. Epigr. i. 46.

[3] The school of Aristotle, the founder of the Peripatetic philosophy.

[4] The school of Zeno, the founder of the Stoic philosophy.

[5] According to the life of Homer, falsely attributed to Herodotus, this was Homer's original name. See my introduction to Pope's Homer, in the National Illustrated Library edition.

[6] As Pericles and others *fulmined over Greece to Artaxerxes' throne* against the Persian king, so Demosthenes was the orator particularly who *fulmined over Greece to Macedon*, against king Philip.—*Newton.*

From Heaven descended to the low-roofed house
Of Socrates; see there his tenement,
Whom well inspired the oracle pronounced
Wisest of men; from whose mouth issued forth
Mellifluous streams that watered all the schools
Of academics old and new, with those
Surnamed Peripatetics, and the sect
Epicuréan, and the Stoic severe:
These here revolve, or, as thou lik'st, at home,
Till time mature thee to a kingdom's weight.
These rules will render thee a king complete
Within thyself, much more with empire joined."
To whom our Saviour sagely thus replied:
"Think not but that I know these things, or think
I know them not; not therefore am I short
Of knowing what I ought: he who receives
Light from above, from the fountain of light,
No other doctrine needs, though granted true,
But these are false, or little else but dreams,
Conjectures, fancies, built on nothing firm.
The first and wisest of them all professed
To know this only, that he nothing knew;
The next to fabling fell and smooth conceits;
A third sort doubted all things, though plain sense;
Others in virtue placed felicity,
But virtue joined with riches and long life;
In corporal pleasure he, and careless ease;
The Stoic last, in philosophic pride,
By him called virtue; and his virtuous man,
Wise, perfect in himself, and all possessing,
Equals to God, oft shames not to prefer,
As fearing God nor man, contemning all
Wealth, pleasure, pain, or torment, death and life,
Which when he lists he leaves, or boasts he can,
For all his tedious talk is but vain boast,
Or subtle shifts conviction to evade.
Alas! what can they teach and not mislead,
Ignorant of themselves, of God much more,
And how the world began, and how man fell
Degraded by himself, on grace depending?
Much of the soul they talk, but all awry,
And in themselves seek virtue, and to themselves
All glory arrogate, to God give none,
Rather accuse him under usual names,

Fortune and Fate, as one regardless quite
Of mortal things. Who therefore seeks in these
True wisdom, finds her not, or by delusion,
Far worse, her false resemblance only meets,
An empty cloud. However, many books,
Wise men have said, are wearisome: who reads
Incessantly, and to his reading brings not
A spirit and judgment equal or superior
(And what he brings, what needs he elsewhere seek?),
Uncertain and unsettled still remains,
Deep versed in books and shallow in himself,
Crude or intoxicate, collecting toys,
And trifles for choice matters, worth a sponge;
As children gathering pebbles on the shore.
Or if I would delight my private hours
With music or with poem, where so soon
As in our native language can I find
That solace? All our law and story strewed
With hymns, our psalms with artful terms inscribed,
Our Hebrew songs and harps in Babylon,
That pleased so well our victors' ear, declare
That rather Greece from us these arts derived;[1]
Ill imitated, while they loudest sing
The vices of their deities, and their own
In fable, hymn, or song, so personating
Their gods ridiculous, and themselves past shame
Remove their swelling epithets, thick laid
As varnish on a harlot's cheek, the rest,
Thin sown with aught of profit or delight,
Will far be found unworthy to compare
With Sion's songs, to all true tastes excelling,
Where God is praised aright, and god-like men,
The Holiest of Holies, and his saints;
Such are from God inspired, not such from thee,
Unless where moral virtue is expressed
By light of nature not in all quite lost.
Their orators thou then extoll'st, as those
The top of eloquence; statists[2] indeed,
And lovers of their country, as may seem;

[1] This was the system in vogue at that time. It was established and supported with vast erudition by Bochart, and carried to an extravagant and even ridiculous length by Huetius and Gale.—*Warburton.*

[2] Statesmen, a word used by Shakspeare.

But herein to our prophets far beneath,
As men divinely taught, and better teaching
The solid rules of civil government,
In their majestic, unaffected style,
Than all the oratory of Greece and Rome.
In them is plainest taught, and easiest learnt,
What makes a nation happy, and keeps it so,
What ruins kingdoms, and lays cities flat;
These only with our law best form a king."
So spake the Son of God: but Satan now
Quite at a loss, for all his darts were spent,
Thus to our Saviour with stern brow replied:
"Since neither wealth, nor honour, arms nor arts,
Kingdom nor empire, pleases thee, nor aught
By me proposed in life contemplative,
Or active, tended on by glory or fame,
What dost thou in this world? The wilderness
For thee is fittest place; I found thee there,
And thither will return thee; yet remember
What I foretell thee: soon thou shalt have cause
To wish thou never hadst rejected thus
Nicely or cautiously my offered aid,
Which would have set thee in short time with ease
On David's throne, or throne of all the world,
Now at full age, fullness of time, thy season,
When prophecies of thee are best fulfilled.
Now contrary, if I read aught in Heaven,[1]
Or Heaven write aught of fate, by what the stars
Voluminous, or single characters,
In their conjunction met, give me to spell,
Sorrows, and labours, opposition, hate,
Attends thee, scorns, reproaches, injuries,
Violence and stripes, and lastly cruel death;
A kingdom they portend thee, but what kingdom,
Real or allegoric, I discern not,
Nor when, eternal sure, as without end,
Without beginning; for no date prefixed
Directs me in the starry rubric set."

[1] A satire on Cardan, who, with the boldness and impiety of an atheist and a madman, both of which he was, cast the nativity of Jesus Christ, and found by the great and illustrious concourse of stars at his birth, that he must needs have the fortune which befell him, and become the author of a religion, which should spread itself far and near for many ages.—*Newton.*

So saying he took (for still he knew his power
Not yet expired), and to the wilderness
Brought back the Son of God, and left him there,
Feigning to disappear. Darkness now rose,
As daylight sunk, and brought in louring night,
Her shadowy offspring, unsubstantial both,
Privation mere of light and absent day.
Our Saviour meek, and with untroubled mind
After his airy jaunt, though hurried sore,
Hungry and cold, betook him to his rest,
Wherever, under some concourse of shades,
Whose branching arms, thick intertwined, might shield
From dews and damps of night his sheltered head,
But sheltered slept in vain, for at his head
The tempter watched, and soon with ugly dreams
Disturbed his sleep; and either tropic now
'Gan thunder, and both ends of Heaven, the clouds
From many a horrid rift abortive poured,
Fierce rain with lightning mixed, water with fire
In ruin reconciled: nor slept the winds
Within their stony caves, but rushed abroad
From the four hinges of the world, and fell
On the vexed wilderness, whose tallest pines,
Though rooted deep as high, and sturdiest oaks
Bowed their stiff necks, loaden with stormy blasts,
Or torn up sheer: ill wast thou shrouded then,
O patient Son of God, yet only stood'st
Unshaken; nor yet stayed the terror there,
Infernal ghosts, and hellish furies, round
Environed thee, some howled, some yelled, some shrieked,
Some bent at thee their fiery darts, while thou
Sat'st unappalled in calm and sinless peace.
Thus passed the night so foul, till morning fair
Came forth with pilgrim steps in amice[1] gray,
Who with her radiant finger stilled the roar
Of thunder, chased the clouds, and laid the winds
And grisly spectres, which the fiend had raised
To tempt the Son of God with terrors dire.
And now the sun, with more effectual beams,
Had cheered the face of earth, and dried the wet
From drooping plant, or dropping tree; the birds,
Who all things now behold[2] more fresh and green,
After a night of storm so ruinous.

[1] Clothing, from *amicis*. [2] Probably "beheld."

Cleared up their choicest notes in bush and spray
To gratulate the sweet return of morn;
Nor yet amidst this joy and brightest morn
Was absent, after all his mischief done,
The prince of darkness, glad would also seem
Of this fair change, and to our Saviour came,
Yet with no new device, they all were spent,
Rather by this his last affront resolved,
Desperate of better course, to vent his rage,
And mad despite to be so oft repelled.
Him walking on a sunny hill he found,
Backed on the north and west by a thick wood;
Out of the wood he starts in wonted shape,
And in a careless mood thus to him said:
" Fair morning yet betides thee, Son of God,
After a dismal night; I heard the wrack
As earth and sky would mingle; but myself
Was distant; and these flaws, though mortals fear them
As dangerous to the pillared frame of Heaven,
Or to the earth's dark basis underneath,
Are to the main as inconsiderable,
And harmless, if not wholesome, as a sneeze
To man's less universe, and soon are gone:
Yet as being oft-times noxious where they light
On man, beast, plant, wasteful and turbulent,
Like turbulencies in the affairs of men,
Over whose heads they roar, and seem to point,
They oft fore-signify and threaten ill:
This tempest at this desert most was bent;
Of men at thee, for only thou here dwell'st.
Did I not tell thee,[1] if thou didst reject
The perfect season offered with my aid
To win thy destined seat, but wilt prolong
All to the push of fate, pursue thy way
Of gaining David's throne no man knows when,
For both the when and how is no where told,
Thou shalt be what thou art ordained, no doubt;
For angels have proclaimed it, but concealing
The time and means: each act is rightliest done,
Not when it must, but when it may be best
If thou observe not this, be sure to find,
What I foretold thee, many a hard assay

[1] This sentence is, as Newton observes, " dark and perplexed, having no proper exit."

Of dangers, and adversities, and pains,
Ere thou of Israel's sceptre get fast hold;
Whereof this ominous night that closed thee round,
So many terrors, voices, prodigies,
May warn thee, as a sure foregoing sign."
So talked he; while the Son of God went on
And stayed not, but in brief him answered thus:
"Me worse than wet thou find'st not; other harm
Those terrors which thou speak'st of did me none;
I never feared they could, though noising loud
And threatening nigh; what they can do as signs
Betokening, or ill boding, I contemn
As false portents, not sent from God, but thee;
Who knowing I shall reign past thy preventing,
Obtrud'st thy offered aid, that I accepting,
At least might seem to hold all power of thee,
Ambitious spirit, and wouldst be thought my God,
And storm'st refused, thinking to terrify,
Me to thy will. Desist, thou art discerned,
And toil'st in vain, nor me in vain molest."
To whom the fiend, now swollen with rage, replied:
"Then hear, O Son of David, virgin-born;
For Son of God to me is yet in doubt:
Of the Messiah I have heard foretold
By all the prophets; of thy birth at length
Announced by Gabriel with the first I knew,
And of the angelic song in Bethlehem field,
On thy birth-night, that sung thee Saviour born.
From that time seldom have I ceased to eye
Thy infancy, thy childhood, and thy youth,
Thy manhood last, though yet in private bred
Till at the ford of Jordan, whither all
Flocked to the Baptist, I among the rest,
Though not to be baptized, by voice from Heaven
Heard thee pronounced the Son of God beloved.
Thenceforth I thought thee worth my nearer view
And narrower scrutiny, that I might learn
In what degree or meaning thou art called
The Son of God, which bears no single sense:
The son of God I also am, or was,
And if I was, I am; relation stands;
All men are sons of God; yet thee I thought
In some respect far higher so declared.
Therefore I watched thy footsteps from that hour,

And followed thee still on to this waste wild,
Where by all best conjectures I collect
Thou art to be my fatal enemy.
Good reason then, if I beforehand seek
To understand my adversary, who
And what he is; his wisdom, power, intent;
By parle, or composition, truce, or league
To win him, or win from him what I can.
And opportunity I here have had
To try thee, sift thee, and confess have found thee
Proof against all temptation, as a rock
Of adamant, and as a centre, firm,
To the utmost of mere man both wise and good,
Not more; for honours, riches, kingdoms, glory,
Have been before contemned, and may again:
Therefore to know what more thou art than man,
Worth naming Son of God by voice from Heaven,
Another method I must now begin."
So saying, he caught him up, and, without wing
Of hippogrif,[1] bore through the air sublime
Over the wilderness and o'er the plain;
Till underneath them fair Jerusalem,
The holy city, lifted high her towers,
And higher yet the glorious temple reared
Her pile, far off appearing like a mount
Of alabaster, topped with golden spires:
There on the highest pinnacle he set
The Son of God, and added thus in scorn:
"There stand, if thou wilt stand; to stand upright
Will ask thee skill; I to thy Father's house
Have brought thee, and highest placed, highest is best;
Now show thy progeny; if not to stand,
Cast thyself down; safely, if Son of God;
For it is written, 'He will give command
Concerning thee to his angels, in their hands
They shall up-lift thee, lest at any time
Thou chance to dash thy foot against a stone.'"
To whom thus Jesus: "Also it is written,
Tempt not the Lord thy God:" he said and stood:
But Satan, smitten with amazement, fell.
As when earth's son, Antæus (to compare

[1] A quiz upon Ariosto, with whom this horse-griffin monster is a great favourite.

Small things with greatest) in Irassa[1] strove
With Jove's Alcides, and oft foiled still rose,
Receiving from his mother earth new strength,
Fresh from his fall, and fiercer grapple joined,
Throttled at length in the air, expired and fell;
So after many a foil the tempter proud,
Renewing fresh assaults, amidst his pride
Fell whence he stood to see his victor fall.
And as that Theban monster[2] that proposed
Her riddle, and him who solved it not devoured,
That once found out and solved, for grief and spite
Cast herself headlong from the Ismenian[3] steep;
So struck with dread and anguish fell the fiend,
And to his crew, that sat consulting, brought
Joyless triumphals of his hoped success,
Ruin, and desperation, and dismay,
Who durst so proudly tempt the Son of God.
So Satan fell; and straight a fiery globe
Of angels on full sail of wing flew nigh,
Who on their plumy vans received him soft
From his uneasy station, and upbore,
As on a floating couch, through the blithe air,
Then in a flowery valley set him down
On a green bank, and set before him spread
A table of celestial food, divine,
Ambrosial fruits, fetched from the tree of life,
And from the fount of life ambrosial drink,
That soon refreshed him wearied, and repaired
What hunger, if aught hunger had impaired,
Or thirst; and as he fed, angelic quires
Sung heavenly anthems of his victory
Over temptation, and the tempter proud.

"True image of the Father, whether throned
In the bosom of bliss, and light of light
Conceiving, or remote from Heaven, enshrined
In fleshly tabernacle, and human form,
Wandering the wilderness, whatever place,
Habit, or state, or motion, still expressing
The Son of God, with godlike force endued
Against the attempter of thy Father's throne,
And thief of Paradise; him long of old
Thou didst debel,[4] and down from Heaven cast

[1] A city in Libya. [2] The Sphinx. [3] Theban.
[4] War down, subdue, from the Latin *debellare*.

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PARADISE REGAINED.

Thus they the Son of God, our Saviour meek,
Sung victor, and from heavenly feast refresh'd,
Brought on his way with joy.

With all his army; now thou hast avenged
Supplanted Adam, and by vanquishing
Temptation, hast regained lost Paradise,
And frustrated the conquest fraudulent:
He never more henceforth will dare set foot
In Paradise to tempt; his snares are broke:
For though that seat of earthly bliss be failed,
A fairer Paradise is founded now
For Adam and his chosen sons, whom thou
A Saviour art come down to reinstal
Where they shall dwell secure, when time shall be,
Of tempter and temptation without fear.
But thou, infernal serpent, shalt not long
Rule in the clouds; like an autumnal star
Or lightning thou shalt fall from Heaven, trod down
Under his feet; for proof, ere this thou feel'st
Thy wound, yet not thy last and deadliest wound,
By this repulse received, and hold'st in Hell
No triumph; in all her gates Abaddon rues
Thy bold attempt; hereafter learn with awe
To dread the Son of God: he all unarmed
Shall chase thee with the terror of his voice
From thy demoniac holds, possession foul,
Thee and thy legions; yelling they shall fly,
And beg to hide them in a herd of swine,
Lest he command them down into the deep
Bound, and to torment sent before their time.
Hail! Son of the Most High, heir of both worlds,
Queller of Satan, on thy glorious work
Now enter, and begin to save mankind."
Thus they the Son of God, our Saviour meek,
Sung victor, and from heavenly feast refreshed
Brought on his way with joy; he unobserved
Home to his mother's house private returned.

END OF PARADISE REGAINED

Samson Agonistes.[1]

A DRAMATIC POEM.

Τραγῳδία μίμησις πράξεως σπουδαίας.—κ. τ. λ.
ARISTOT. *Poet.*, cap. vi.

Tragœdia est imitatio actionis seriæ, &c., per misericordiam et metum perficiens talium affectuum lustrationem.

OF THAT SORT OF DRAMATIC POEM WHICH IS CALLED TRAGEDY.

TRAGEDY, as it was anciently composed, hath been ever held the gravest, moralest, and most profitable of all other poems; therefore said by Aristotle to be of power, by raising pity and fear, or terror, to purge the mind of those and such like passions, that is, to temper and reduce them to just measure with a kind of delight, stirred up by reading

[1] The tragedy of "Samson Agonistes" has been celebrated as the second work of the great author of "Paradise Lost," and opposed, with all the confidence of triumph, to the dramatic performances of other nations. It contains, indeed, just sentiments, maxims of wisdom, and oracles of piety, and many passages written with the ancient spirit of choral poetry, in which there is a just and pleasing mixture of Seneca's moral declamation, with the wild enthusiasm of the Greek writers. It is therefore worthy of examination, whether a performance thus illuminated with genius, and enriched with learning, is composed according to the indispensable laws of Aristotelian criticism; and, omitting at present all other considerations, whether it exhibits a beginning, a . . iddle, or an end.

The beginning is undoubtedly beautiful and proper, opening with a graceful abruptness, and proceeding naturally to a mournful recital

or seeing those passions well imitated. Nor is nature wanting in her own effects to make good his assertion: for so in physic, things of melancholic hue and quality are used against melancholy, sour against sour; salt to remove salt humours. Hence, philosophers and other gravest writers, as Cicero, Plutarch, and others, frequently cite out of tragic poets, both to adorn and illustrate their discourse. The Apostle Paul himself thought it not unworthy to insert a verse of Euripides into the text of Holy Scripture, 1 Cor. xv. 33; and Paræus, commenting on the Revelation, divides the whole book as a tragedy, into acts distinguished each by a chorus of heavenly harpings and song between. Heretofore, men in highest dignity have laboured not a little to be thought able to compose a tragedy. Of that honour Dionysius the elder was no less ambitious, than before of his attaining to the tyranny. Augustus Cæsar also begun his Ajax, but unable to please his own judgment with what he had begun, left it unfinished. Seneca, the philosopher, is by some thought the author of those tragedies (at least the best of them) that go under that name. Gregory Nazianzen, a father of the church, thought it not unbeseeming the sanctity of his person to write a tragedy, which is entitled "Christ Suffering." This is mentioned to vindicate tragedy from the small esteem, or rather infamy, which, in the account of many, it undergoes at this day with other common interludes; happening through the poets' error of intermixing comic stuff with tragic sadness and gravity; or introducing trivial and vulgar persons, which by all judicious hath been counted absurd; and brought in without discretion, corruptly to gratify the people. And though ancient tragedy use no prologue, yet using sometimes, in case of self defence or explanation, that which Martial calls an epistle; in behalf of this tragedy coming forth after the ancient manner, much different from what among us passes for best, thus much beforehand may be epistled; that chorus is here introduced after the Greek manner, not ancient only but modern, and still in use among the Italians. In the modelling, therefore, of

of facts necessary to be known. Samson's soliloquy is interrupted by a chorus or company of men of his own tribe, who condole his miseries, extenuate his fault, and conclude with a solemn vindication of divine justice. So that, at the conclusion of the first act, there is no design laid, no discovery made, nor any disposition formed, towards the consequent event.—*Johnson*, Rambler, No. 139.

this poem, with good reason, the ancients and Italians are rather followed, as of much more authority and fame, The measure of verse used in the chorus is of all sorts, called by the Greeks Monostrophic, or rather Apolelymenon, without regard had to Strophe, Antistrophe, or Epode, which were a kind of stanzas framed only for the music then used with the chorus that sung; not essential to the poem, and therefore not material; or being divided into stanzas or pauses, they may be called Allœostropha Division into act and scene referring chiefly to the stage (to which this work never was intended), is here omitted.

It suffices if the whole drama be found not produced beyond the fifth act. Of the style and uniformity, and that commonly called the plot, whether intricate or explicit, which is nothing, indeed, but such œconomy or disposition of the fable as may stand best with verisimilitude and decorum; they only will best judge who are not unacquainted with Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, the three tragic poets unequalled yet by any, and the best rule to all who endeavour to write tragedy. The circumscription of time, wherein the whole drama begins and ends, is, according to ancient rule and best example, within the space of twenty-four hours.

THE PERSONS.

SAMSON.
MANOAH, *the Father of Samson*
DALILA, *his Wife.*
HARAPHA *of Gath.*
Public Officer.
Messenger.
Chorus of Danites.

The SCENE *before the Prison in Gaza.*

THE ARGUMENT.

Samson made captive, blind, and now in the prison at Gaza, there to labour as in a common workhouse, on a festival day, in the general cessation from labour, comes forth into the open air to a place nigh, somewhat retired, there to sit awhile and bemoan his condition; where he happens at length to be visited by certain friends and equals of his tribe, which make the Chorus, who seek to comfort him what they can; then by his old father, Manoah, who endeavours the like, and withal tells him his purpose to procure his liberty by ransom; lastly, that this feast was proclaimed by the Philistines as a day of thanksgiving for their deliverance from the hands of Samson, which yet more troubles him. Manoah then departs to prosecute his endeavour with the Philistian lords for Samson's redemption; who in the mean while is visited by other persons, and lastly by a public officer, to require his coming to the feast before the lords and people, to play or show his strength in their presence: he at first refuses, dismissing the public officer with absolute denial to come; at length, persuaded inwardly that this was from God, he yields to go along with him, who came now the second time with great threatenings to fetch him. The Chorus yet remaining on the place, Manoah returns, full of joyful hope, to procure ere long his son's deliverance; in the midst of which discourse an Hebrew comes in haste, confusedly at first, and afterward more distinctly, relating the catastrophe, what Samson had done to the Philistines, and by accident to himself; wherewith the tragedy ends.

SAMSON.

A LITTLE onward lend thy guiding hand[1]
To these dark steps, a little further on;
For yonder bank hath choice of sun or shade:
There I am wont to sit when any chance
Relieves me from my task of servile toil,
Daily in the common prison else enjoined me,
Where I a prisoner chained, scarce freely draw
The air imprisoned also, close and damp,
Unwholesome draught: but here I feel amends,
The breath of Heaven fresh blowing, pure and sweet,
With day-spring born; here leave me to respire.
This day a solemn feast the people hold
To Dagon their sea idol,[2] and forbid

[1] The opening scene of this tragedy is highly suggestive of the commencement of the Œdipus at Colonus of Sophocles, where the blind Œdipus is introduced, guided by his daughter Antigone.

[2] See note on Paradise Lost, i. 462.

Laborious works; unwillingly this rest
Their superstition yields me; hence with leave
Retiring from the popular noise, I seek
This unfrequented place to find some ease,
Ease to the body some, none to the mind
From restless thoughts, that like a deadly swarm
Of hornets armed, no sooner found alone,
But rush upon me thronging, and present
Times past, what once I was, and what am now.
Oh, wherefore was my birth from Heaven foretold
Twice by an angel, who at last in sight
Of both my parents all in flames ascended
From off the altar, where an offering burned,
As in a fiery column charioting
His god-like presence, and from some great act
Or benefit revealed to Abraham's race?
Why was my breeding ordered and prescribed
As of a person separate to God,
Designed for great exploits; if I must die
Betrayed, captived, and both my eyes put out,
Made of my enemies the scorn and gaze;
To grind in brazen fetters under task
With this Heaven-gifted strength? O glorious strength
Put to the labour of a beast, debased
Lower than bondslave! Promise was that I
Should Israel from Philistian yoke deliver;
Ask for this great deliverer now, and find him
Eyeless in Gaza, at the mill with slaves,
Himself in bonds under Philistian yoke:
Yet stay, let me not rashly call in doubt
Divine prediction; what if all foretold
Had been fulfilled but through mine own default,
Whom have I to complain of but myself?
Who this high gift of strength committed to me,
In what part lodged, how easily bereft me,
Under the seal of silence could not keep,
But weakly to a woman must reveal it,
O'ercome with importunity and tears.
O impotence of mind, in body strong!
But what is strength without a double share
Of wisdom? vast, unwieldy, burdensome,
Proudly secure, yet liable to fall
By weakest subtleties, not made to rule,
But to subserve where wisdom bears command!

God, when he gave me strength, to show withal
How slight the gift was, hung it in my hair.
But peace! I must not quarrel with the will
Of highest dispensation, which herein
Haply had ends above my reach to know:
Suffices that to me strength is my bane,
And proves the source of all my miseries;
So many and so huge, that each apart
Would ask a life to wail; but chief of all,
O loss of sight, of thee I most complain!
Blind among enemies, O worse than chains,
Dungeon or beggary, or decrepit age!
Light, the prime work of God, to me is extinct,
And all her various objects of delight
Annulled, which might in part my grief have eased,
Inferior to the vilest now become
Of man or worm; the vilest here excel me;
They creep, yet see; I, dark in light, exposed
To daily fraud, contempt, abuse, and wrong,
Within doors, or without, still as a fool,
In power of others, never in my own;
Scarce half I seem to live, dead more than half.
Oh, dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,
Irrecoverably dark, total eclipse,
Without all hope of day!
O first created beam, and thou great Word,
"Let there be light!" and light was over all;
Why am I thus bereaved thy prime decree?
The sun to me is dark
And silent as the moon,
When she deserts the night,
Hid in her vacant interlunar cave.[1]
Since light so necessary is to life,
And almost life itself, if it be true
That light is in the soul,
She all in every part: why was the sight
To such a tender ball as the eye confined,
So obvious and so easy to be quenched?

[1] Perhaps, as Thyer observes, alluding to the notion which our poet has adopted from Hesiod, in Paradise Lost, vi. 4:—

"There is a cave
Within the mount of God, fast by his throne,
Where light and darkness in perpetual round
Lodge and dislodge by turns."

And not as feeling through all parts diffused,
That she might look at will through every pore?
Then had I not been thus exiled from light,
As in the land of darkness, yet in light,
To live a life half dead, a living death,
And buried; but, oh, yet more miserable!
Myself, my sepulchre, a moving grave,
Buried, yet not exempt
By privilege of death and burial
From worst of other evils, pains and wrongs,
But made hereby obnoxious more
To all the miseries of life,
Life in captivity
Among inhuman foes.
But who are these? for with joint pace I hear
The tread of many feet steering this way;
Perhaps my enemies, who come to stare
At my affliction, and perhaps to insult,
Their daily practice to afflict me more.

CHORUS.

This, this is he; softly awhile,
Let us not break in upon him:
Oh, change beyond report, thought, or belief!
See how he lies at random, carelessly diffused,[1]
With languished head unpropped,
As one past hope, abandoned,
And by himself given over;
In slavish habit, ill-fitted weeds
O'er-worn and soiled;
Or do my eyes misrepresent? Can this be he,
That heroic, that renowned,
Irresistible Samson? whom unarmed
No strength of man, or fiercest wild beast could withstand,
Who tore the lion, as the lion tears the kid,
Ran on embattled armies clad in iron,
And weaponless himself;
Made arms ridiculous, useless the forgery
Of brazen shield and spear, the hammered cuirass,
Chalybean[2] tempered steel, and frock of mail,
Adamantean proof;
But safest he who stood aloof,

[1] Poured, stretched out.

[2] So called from the Chalybes, who were famous for their skill in tempering steel.

When insupportably his foot advanced,[1]
In scorn of their proud arms and warlike tools,
Spurned them to death by troops. The bold Ascalonite
Fled from his lion ramp, old warriors turned
Their plated backs under his heel;
Or grovelling soiled their crested helmets in the dust.
Then with what trivial weapon came to hand,
The jaw of a dead ass, his sword of bone,
A thousand foreskins fell, the flower of Palestine,
In Ramath-lechi[2] famous to this day.
Then by main force pulled up, and on his shoulders bore
The gates of Azza, post,[3] and massy bar,
Up to the hill by Hebron, seat of giants old,[4]
No journey of a sabbath-day,[5] and loaded so;
Like whom the Gentiles feign to bear up Heaven.
Which shall I first bewail,
Thy bondage or lost sight,
Prison within prison,
Inseparably dark?
Thou art become (oh, worst imprisonment!)
The dungeon of thyself; thy soul
(Which men enjoying sight oft without cause complain)
Imprisoned now indeed,
In real darkness of the body dwells,
Shut up from outward light
To incorporate with gloomy night;
For inward light, alas!
Puts forth no visual beam.
O mirror of our fickle state,
Since man on earth unparalleled!
The rarer thy example stands,
By how much from the top of wondrous glory,
Strongest of mortal men,
To lowest pitch of abject fortune thou art fallen.

[1] For this nervous expression Milton was probably indebted to Spenser, F. Q. i. 7, 11:—

> "That when the knight he spied, he 'gan *advance*
> With huge force, and *insupportable* main."—*Thyer.*

[2] Cf. Judges xv. 17.

[3] Some propose to read "posts," from Judges xvi. 3.

[4] Josh. xv. 13 sq.; Numbers xiii. 33.

[5] A Sabbath-day's journey was probably about from three-quarters to the whole of a geographical mile.—See Kitto's Cyclop. ii., p. 159 sq.

For him I reckon not in high estate
Whom long descent of birth
Or the sphere of fortune raises;
But thee whose strength, while virtue was her mate,
Might have subdued the earth,
Universally crowned with highest praises.

SAMSON.

I hear the sound of words, their sense the air
Dissolves unjointed ere it reach my ear

CHORUS.

He speaks, let us draw nigh. Matchless in might,
The glory late of Israel, now the grief;
We come, thy friends and neighbours not unknown,
From Eshtaol and Zora's[1] fruitful vale
To visit or bewail thee; or, if better,
Counsel or consolation we may bring,
Salve to thy sores; apt words have power to swage
The tumours of a troubled mind,
And are as balm to festered wounds

SAMSON.

Your coming, friends, revives me, for I learn
Now of my own experience, not by talk,
How counterfeit a coin they are who friends
Bear in their superscription (of the most
I would be understood): in prosperous days
They swarm, but in adverse withdraw their head,
Not to be found, though sought. Ye see, O friends
How many evils have enclosed me round;
Yet that which was the worst now least afflicts me,
Blindness, for had I sight, confused with shame,
How could I once look up, or heave the head,
Who like a foolish pilot have shipwrecked
My vessel trusted to me from above,
Gloriously rigged; and for a word, a tear,
Fool! have divulged the secret gift of God
To a deceitful woman? Tell me, friends,
Am I not sung and proverbed for a fool
In every street? Do they not say, How well
Are come upon him his deserts? Yet why?
Immeasurable strength they might behold
In me, of wisdom nothing more than mean;

[1] Both cities of the tribe of Dan, the latter being Samson's birthplace.

This with the other should, at least, have paired,
These two proportioned ill drove me transverse

CHORUS.

Tax not divine disposal; wisest men
Have erred, and by bad women been deceived,
And shall again, pretend they ne'er so wise
Deject not then so overmuch thyself,
Who hast of sorrow thy full load besides;
Yet truth to say, I oft have heard men wonder
Why thou shouldst wed Philistian women rather
Than of thine own tribe fairer, or as fair,
At least of thy own nation, and as noble

SAMSON.

The first I saw at Timna,[1] and she pleased
Me, not my parents, that I sought to wed
The daughter of an infidel: they knew not
That what I motioned was of God; I knew
From intimate impulse, and therefore urged
The marriage on; that by occasion hence
I might begin Israel's deliverance,
The work to which I was divinely called
She proving false; the next I took to wife
(Oh that I never had! fond wish too late)
Was in the vale of Sorec,[2] Dalila,
That specious monster, my accomplished snare.
I thought it lawful from my former act,
And the same end; still watching to oppress
Israel's oppressors: of what now I suffer
She was not the prime cause, but I myself,
Who vanquished with a peal of words (Oh weakness!)
Gave up my fort of silence to a woman

CHORUS.

In seeking just occasion to provoke
The Philistine, thy country's enemy,
Thou never wast remiss, I bear thee witness
Yet Israël still serves with all his sons.

SAMSON.

That fault I take not on me, but transfer
On Israel's governors, and heads of tribes,
Who seeing those great acts, which God had done
Singly by me against their conquerors,
Acknowledged not, or not at all considered
Deliverance offered: I, on the other side,

[1] Judges xiv. i. [2] Judges xvi. 4.

Used no ambition[1] to commend my deeds,
The deeds themselves, though mute, spoke loud the doer;
But they persisted deaf, and would not seem
To count them things worth notice, till at length
Their lords, the Philistines, with gathered powers,
Entered Judea seeking me, who then
Safe to the rock of Etham[2] was retired,
Not flying, but forecasting in what place
To set upon them, what advantaged best:
Meanwhile the men of Judah, to prevent
The harass of their land, beset me round;
I willingly on some conditions came
Into their hands, and they as gladly yield me
To the uncircumcised a welcome prey,
Bound with two cords; but cords to me were threads
Touched with the flame: on their whole host I flew
Unarmed, and with a trivial weapon felled
Their choicest youth; they only lived who fled
Had Judah that day joined, or one whole tribe,
They had by this possessed the towers of Gath,
And lorded over them whom now they serve.
But what more oft in nations grown corrupt,
And by their vices brought to servitude,
Than to love bondage more than liberty,
Bondage with ease than strenuous liberty;
And to despise, or envy, or suspect
Whom God hath of his special favour raised
As their deliverer; if he aught begin,
How frequent to desert him, and at last
To heap ingratitude on worthiest deeds?

CHORUS.

Thy words to my remembrance bring
How Succoth and the fort of Penuel
Their great deliverer contemned,
The matchless Gideon in pursuit
Of Madian and her vanquished kings:
And how ingrateful Ephraim
Had dealt with Jephtha, who by argument,
Not worse than by his shield and spear,
Defended Israel from the Ammonite,
Had not his prowess quelled their pride
In that sore battle, when so many died

[1] Made no elaborate canvass, sought not to curry favour; from the Latin electioneering term, *ambire*. [2] Judges xv. 8.

Without reprieve adjudged to death,
For want of well pronouncing Shibboleth.

SAMSON.

Of such examples add me to the roll,
Me easily indeed mine may neglect,
But God's proposed deliverance not so

CHORUS.

Just are the ways of God,
And justifiable to men;
Unless there be who think not God at all:
If any be, they walk obscure;
For of such doctrine never was there school,
But the heart of the fool,
And no man therein doctor but himself.
Yet more there be who doubt his ways not just,
As to his own edicts found contradicting,
Then give the reins to wandering thought,
Regardless of his glory's diminution;
Till by their own perplexities involved
They ravel more, still less resolved,
But never find self-satisfying solution.
As if they would confine the Interminable,
And tie him to his own prescript,
Who made our laws to bind us, not himself,
And hath full right to exempt
Whom so it pleases him by choice
From national obstriction, without taint
Of sin, or legal debt;
For with his own laws he can best dispense.
He would not else who never wanted means,
Nor in respect of the enemy just cause
To set his people free,
Have prompted this heroic Nazarite,
Against his vow of strictest purity,
To seek in marriage that fallacious bride,
Unclean, unchaste.
Down reason then, at least vain reasonings down,
Though reason here aver
That moral verdict quits her of unclean:
Unchaste was subsequent, her stain not his.
But see, here comes thy reverend sire
With careful step, locks white as down,
Old Manoah: advise
Forthwith how thou oughtst to receive him

SAMSON.

Ay me! another inward grief awaked
With mention of that name renews the assault

MANOAH.

Brethren and men of Dan, for such ye seem,
Though in this uncouth place; if old respect,
As I suppose, towards your once gloried friend,
My son now captive, hither hath informed
Your younger feet; while mine, cast back with age,
Came lagging on after; say if he be here

CHORUS.

As signal now in low dejected state,
As erst in highest, behold him where he lies

MANOAH.

Oh, miserable change! is this the man,
That invincible Samson, far renowned,
The dread of Israel's foes, who with a strength
Equivalent to angels walked their streets,
None offering fight; who single combatant
Duelled their armies ranked in proud array,
Himself an army, now unequal match
To save himself against a coward armed
At one spear's length. Oh, ever-failing trust
In mortal strength! and oh, what not in man
Deceivable and vain? Nay, what thing good
Prayed for, but often proves our woe, our bane?
I prayed for children, and thought barrenness
In wedlock a reproach; I gained a son,
And such a son as all men hailed me happy;
Who would be now a father in my stead?
Oh, wherefore did God grant me my request,
And, as a blessing, with such pomp adorned?
Why are his gifts desirable, to tempt
Our earnest prayers, then given with solemn hand
As graces, draw a scorpion's tail behind?
For this did the angel twice descend? for this
Ordained thy nurture holy, as of a plant
Select, and sacred, glorious for a while,
The miracle of men; then in an hour
Ensnared, assaulted, overcome, led bound,
Thy foes' derision, captive, poor, and blind,
Into a dungeon thrust, to work with slaves
Alas! methinks whom God hath chosen once
To worthiest deeds, if he through frailty err

He should not so o'erwhelm, and as a thrall
Subject him to so foul indignities,
Be it but for honour's sake of former deeds.

SAMSON.

Appoint[1] not heavenly disposition, father;
Nothing of all these evils hath befallen me
But justly; I myself have brought them on,
Sole author I, sole cause: if aught seem vile,
As vile hath been my folly, who have profaned
The mystery of God given me under pledge
Of vow, and have betrayed it to a woman,
A Canaanite, my faithless enemy.
This well I knew, nor was at all surprised,
But warned by oft experience: did not she
Of Timna first betray me, and reveal
The secret wrested from me in her height
Of nuptial love professed, carrying it straight
To them who had corrupted her, my spies,
And rivals? In this other was there found
More faith, who also in her prime of love,
Spousal embraces, vitiated with gold,
Though offered only, by the scent conceived
Her spurious first-born, treason against me?
Thrice she assayed with flattering prayers and sighs,
And amorous reproaches, to win from me
My capital secret, in what part my strength
Lay stored, in what part summed, that she might know;
Thrice I deluded her, and turned to sport
Her importunity, each time perceiving
How openly, and with what impudence
She purposed to betray me, and (which was worse
Than undissembled hate) with what contempt
She sought to make me traitor to myself;
Yet the fourth time, when mustering all her wiles,
With blandished parleys, feminine assaults,
Tongue-batteries, she surceased not day nor night
To storm me over-watched, and wearied out,
At times when men seek most repose and rest,
I yielded, and unlocked her all my heart,
Who with a grain of manhood well resolved
Might easily have shook off all her snares:
But foul effeminacy held me yoked
Her bond-slave; oh, indignity! oh, blot

[1] Arraign.

To honour and religion! servile mind
Rewarded well with servile punishment!
The base degree to which I now am fallen,
These rags, this grinding, is not yet so base
As was my former servitude, ignoble,
Unmanly, ignominious, infamous.
True slavery, and that blindness worse than this,
That saw not how degenerately I served.

MANOAH.

I cannot praise thy marriage choices, son;
Rather approved them not; but thou didst plead
Divine impulsion prompting how thou might'st
Find some occasion to infest our foes.
I state not that; this I am sure, our foes
Found soon occasion thereby to make thee
Their captive, and their triumph; thou the sooner
Temptation found'st, or over-potent charms
To violate the sacred trust of silence
Deposited within thee; which, to have kept
Tacit, was in thy power: true, and thou bear'st
Enough, and more, the burden of that fault;
Bitterly hast thou paid, and still art paying
That rigid score. A worse thing yet remains;
This day[1] the Philistines a popular feast
Here celebrate in Gaza; and proclaim
Great pomp, and sacrifice, and praises loud
To Dagon, as their god who hath delivered
Thee, Samson, bound and blind into their hands,
Them out of thine, who slew'st them many a slain.
So Dagon shall be magnified, and God,
Besides whom is no God, compared with idols,
Disglorified, blasphemed, and had in scorn
By the idolatrous rout amidst their wine;
Which to have come to pass by means of thee,
Samson, of all thy sufferings think the heaviest,
Of all reproach the most with shame that ever
Could have befallen thee and thy father's house.

SAMSON.

Father, I do acknowledge and confess
That I this honour, I this pomp have brought
To Dagon, and advanced his praises high
Among the heathen round; to God have brought
Dishonour, obloquy, and oped the mouths

[1] Cf. Judges xvi. 23.

Of idolists and theists; have brought scandal
To Israel, diffidence of God, and doubt
In feeble hearts, propense enough before
To waver, or fall off and join with idols;
Which is my chief affliction, shame, and sorrow,
The anguish of my soul, that suffers not
Mine eye to harbour sleep, or thoughts to rest.
This only hope relieves me, that the strife
With me hath end; all the contest is now
'Twixt God and Dagon; Dagon hath presumed,
Me overthrown, to enter lists with God,
His deity comparing and preferring
Before the God of Abraham. He, be sure,
Will not connive, or linger, thus provoked,
But will arise and his great name assert:
Dagon must stoop, and shall ere long receive
Such a discomfit, as shall quite despoil him
Of all these boasted trophies won on me,
And with confusion blank his worshippers.

MANOAH.

With cause this hope relieves thee, and these words
I as a prophecy receive; for God,
Nothing more certain, will not long defer
To vindicate the glory of his name
Against all competition, nor will long
Endure it doubtful whether God be Lord,
Or Dagon. But for thee what shall be done?
Thou must not in the mean while here forgot
Lie in this miserable loathsome plight,
Neglected. I already have made way
To some Philistian lords, with whom to treat
About thy ransom: well they may by this
Have satisfied their utmost of revenge
By pains and slaveries, worse than death, inflicted
On thee, who now no more canst do them harm.

SAMSON.

Spare that proposal, father, spare the trouble
Of that solicitation; let me here,
As I deserve, pay on my punishment;
And expiate, if possible, my crime,
Shameful garrulity. To have revealed
Secrets of men, the secrets of a friend,
How heinous had the fact been, how deserving
Contempt and scorn of all, to be excluded

All friendship, and avoided as a blab,
The mark of fool set on his front! But I
God's counsel have not kept, his holy secret
Presumptuously have published, impiously,
Weakly at least, and shamefully, a sin
That Gentiles[1] in their parables condemn
To their abyss and horrid pains confined

MANOAH.

Be penitent and for thy fault contrite,
But act not in thy own affliction, son;
Repent the sin, but if the punishment
Thou canst avoid, self-preservation bids;
Or the execution leave to high disposal,
And let another hand, not thine, exact
Thy penal forfeit from thyself; perhaps
God will relent, and quit thee all his debt;
Who ever more approves and more accepts
(Best pleased with humble and filial submission)
Him who imploring mercy sues for life,
Than who self-rigorous chooses death as due;
Which argues over-just, and self-displeased
For self-offence, more than for God offended
Reject not then what offered means; who knows
But God hath set before us, to return thee
Home to thy country and his sacred house,
Where thou mayst bring thy offerings, to avert
His further ire, with prayers and vows renewed?

SAMSON

His pardon I implore; but as for life,
To what end should I seek it? when in strength
All mortals I excelled, and great in hopes
With youthful courage and magnanimous thought
Of birth from Heaven foretold and high exploits,
Full of divine instinct, after some proof
Of acts indeed heroic, far beyond
The sons of Anak, famous now and blazed,
Fearless of danger, like a petty god
I walked about admired of all, and dreaded
On hostile ground, none daring my affront.[2]
Then swollen with pride into the snare I fell
Of fair fallacious looks, venereal trains,

[1] Alluding to the story of Tantalus, who, for revealing the secrets of the gods, was condemned to the torments of Hell.

[2] *i. e.* none daring to meet me face to face

Softened with pleasure and voluptuous life;
At length to lay my head and hallowed pledge
Of all my strength in the lascivious lap
Of a deceitful concubine, who shore me
Like a tame wether, all[1] my precious fleece,
Then turned me out ridiculous, despoiled,
Shaven, and disarmed among mine enemies.

CHORUS.

Desire of wine and all delicious drinks,
Which many a famous warrior overturns,
Thou couldst repress, nor did the dancing ruby
Sparkling, out-poured, the flavour, or the smell,
Or taste that cheers the heart of gods and men,
Allure thee from the cool crystalline stream.

SAMSON.

Wherever fountain or fresh current flowed
Against the eastern ray, translucent, pure,
With touch ethereal of Heaven's fiery rod,
I drank, from the clear milky juice allaying
Thirst, and refreshed: nor envied them the grape
Whose heads that turbulent liquor fills with fumes.

CHORUS.

Oh! madness, to think use of strongest wines
And strongest drinks our chief support of health,
When God with these forbidden made choice to rear
His mighty champion, strong above compare,
Whose drink was only from the liquid brook.[2]

SAMSON.

But what availed this temperance, not complete
Against another object more enticing?
What boots it at one gate to make defence,
And at another to let in the foe,
Effeminately vanquished? by which means,
Now blind, disheartened, shamed, dishonoured, quelled,
To what can I be useful, wherein serve
My nation, and the work from Heaven imposed,
But to sit idle on the household hearth,
A burdenous drone; to visitants a gaze,
Or pitied object, these redundant locks
Robustious to no purpose clustering down,
Vain monument of strength; till length of years

[1] Meadowcourt would read, "*of* my precious fleece;" but there seems no occasion for the alteration.

[2] As being a Nazarite, Judges xiii. 7.

And sedentary numbness craze[1] my limbs
To a contemptible old age obscure?
Here rather let me drudge and earn my bread,
Till vermin or the draff of servile food
Consume me, and oft-invocated death
Hasten the welcome end of all my pains.

MANOAH.

Wilt thou then serve the Philistines with that gift
Which was expressly given thee to annoy them?
Better at home lie bed-rid, not only idle,
Inglorious, unemployed, with age outworn.
But God, who caused a fountain at thy prayer
From the dry ground[2] to spring, thy thirst to allay
After the brunt of battle, can as easy
Cause light again within thy eyes to spring,
Wherewith to serve him better than thou hast;
And I persuade me so; why else this strength
Miraculous yet remaining in those locks?
His might continues in thee not for nought,
Nor shall his wondrous gifts be frustrate thus.

SAMSON.

All otherwise to me my thoughts portend,
That these dark orbs no more shall treat with light,
Nor the other light of life continue long,
But yield to double darkness nigh at hand:
So much I feel my genial spirits droop,
My hopes all flat, nature within me seems
In all her functions weary of herself,
My race of glory run, and race of shame,
And I shall shortly be with them that rest

MANOAH.

Believe not these suggestions, which proceed
From anguish of the mind and humours black,
That mingle with thy fancy. I, however,
Must not omit a father's timely care
To prosecute the means of thy deliverance
By ransom, or how else: meanwhile be calm,
And healing words from these thy friends admit.

[1] Used as in Paradise Lost, xii. 210.

[2] According to the Chaldee paraphrast of Judges xv. 18 sq. Our translation has—"But God clave an hollow place that was *in the jaw*, and there came water thereout." The original word, Lehi, signifies both *a jaw*, and a place so called.—*Newton.*

SAMSON.

Oh, that torment should not be confined
To the body's wounds and sores,
With maladies innumerable
In heart, head, breast, and reins;
But must secret passage find
To the inmost mind,
There exercise all his fierce accidents,
And on her purest spirits prey,
As on entrails, joints and limbs,
With answerable pains, but more intense,
Though void of corporal sense!
My griefs not only pain me
As a lingering disease,
But, finding no redress, ferment and rage,
Nor less than wounds immedicable
Rankle, and fester, and gangrene,
To black mortification.
Thoughts my tormentors armed with deadly stings
Mangle my apprehensive tenderest parts,
Exasperate, exulcerate, and raise
Dire inflammation, which no cooling herb
Or medicinal liquor can assuage,
Nor breath of vernal air from snowy Alp.[1]
Sleep hath forsook and given me o'er
To death's benumbing opium as my only cure:
These faintings, swoonings of despair,
And sense of Heaven's desertion.
I was his nurseling once, and choice delight;
His destined from the womb,
Promised by heavenly message twice descending,
Under his special eye
Abstemious I grew up and thrived amain;
He led me on to mightiest deeds
Above the nerve of mortal arm
Against the uncircumcised, our enemies;
But now hath cast me off as never known,
And to those cruel enemies,
Whom I by his appointment had provoked,
Left me all helpless with the irreparable loss
Of sight, reserved alive to be repeated
The subject of their cruelty or scorn.
Nor am I in the list of them that hope;

[1] Used here for any mountain.

Hopeless are all my evils, all remediless;
This one prayer yet remains, might I be heard,
No long petition, speedy death,
The close of all my miseries, and the balm.

CHORUS.

Many are the sayings of the wise
In ancient and in modern books enrolled,
Extolling patience as the truest fortitude;
And to the bearing well of all calamities,
All chances incident to man's frail life,
Consolatories writ[1]
With studied argument, and much persuasion sought[2]
Lenient of grief[3] and anxious thought:
But with the afflicted in his pangs their sound
Little prevails, or rather seems a tune
Harsh, and of dissonant mood from his complaint,
Unless he feel within
Some source of consolation from above,
Secret refreshings, that repair his strength,
And fainting spirits uphold.
God of our fathers! what is man,
That thou towards him with hand so various,
Or might I say contrarious,
Temperest thy providence through his short course,
Not evenly, as thou rul'st
The angelic orders and inferior creatures mute,
Irrational and brute.
Nor do I name of men the common rout,
That wandering loose about
Grow up and perish, as the summer fly,
Heads[4] without name no more remembered,
But such as thou hast solemnly elected,
With gifts and graces eminently adorned,
To some great work, thy glory,
And people's safety, which in part they effect:
Yet toward these thus dignified, thou oft,
Amidst their height of noon,
Changest thy countenance, and thy hand with no regard
Of highest favours past
From thee on them, or them to thee of service.
Nor only dost degrade them, or remit

[1] Are written. [2] Is soft. [3] Capable of assuaging grief. [4] People.

To life obscured, which were a fair dismission,
But throw'st them lower than thou didst exalt them high,
Unseemly falls in human eye,
Too grievous for the trespass or omission;
Oft leav'st them to the hostile sword
Of heathen and profane, their carcases
To dogs and fowls a prey, or else captived;
Or to the unjust tribunals, under change of times,[1]
And condemnation of the ungrateful multitude.
If these they 'scape, perhaps in poverty[2]
With sickness and disease thou bow'st them down,
Painful diseases and deformed,
In crude[3] old age;
Though not disordinate, yet causeless suffering
The punishment of dissolute days: in fine,
Just or unjust alike seem miserable,
For oft alike both come to evil end.
So deal not with this once thy glorious champion,
The image of thy strength, and mighty minister.
What do I beg? How hast thou dealt already?
Behold him in this state calamitous, and turn
His labours, for thou canst, to peaceful end.
But who is this? what thing of sea or land?
Female of sex it seems,
That so bedecked, ornate, and gay,
Comes this way sailing
Like a stately ship
Of Tarsus, bound for the isles
Of Javan or Gadire,[4]
With all her bravery on, and tackle trim,
Sails filled, and streamers waving,
Courted by all the winds that hold them play,
An amber scent of odorous perfume
Her harbinger, a damsel train behind;
Some rich Philistian matron she may seem,

[1] Here no doubt Milton reflected upon the trials and sufferings of his party after the Restoration; and probably he might have in mind particularly the case of Sir Harry Vane, whom he has so highly celebrated in one of his sonnets.—*Newton.*

[2] This was Milton's own case.

[3] Premature.

[4] Cadiz. On this comparison, see Warburton's note on Shakspeare, Merry Wives, iii. 8.

And now, at nearer view, no other certain
Than Dalila thy wife.

SAMSON.

My wife, my traitress! let her not come near me.

CHORUS.

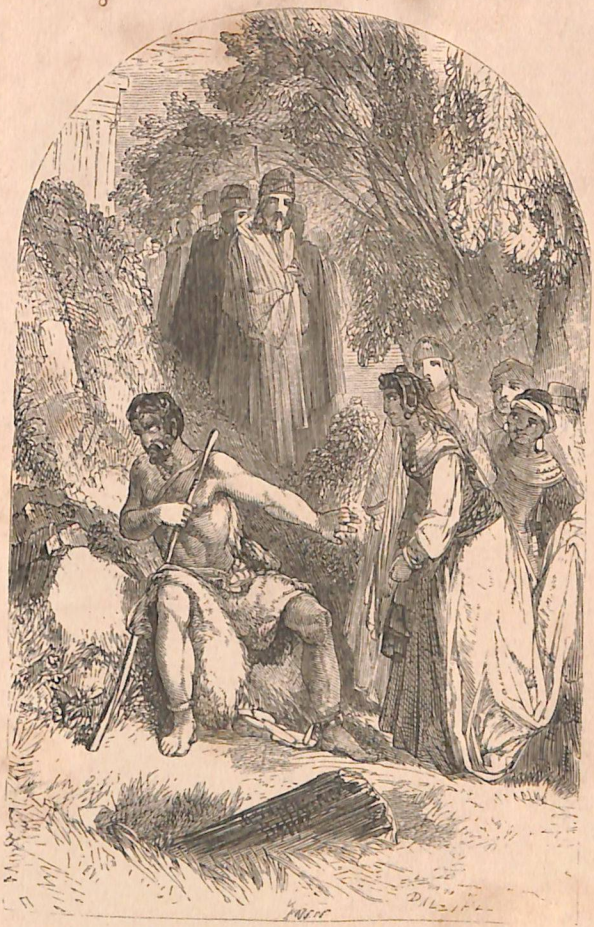
Yet on she moves, now stands and eyes thee fixed,
About to have spoke, but now, with head declined
Like a fair flower surcharged with dew, she weeps,
And words addressed seem into tears dissolved,
Wetting the borders of her silken veil:
But now again she makes address to speak.

DALILA.

With doubtful feet and wavering resolution
I came, still dreading thy displeasure, Samson,
Which to have merited, without excuse,
I cannot but acknowledge; yet if tears
May expiate (though the fact more evil drew
In the perverse event than I foresaw),
My penance hath not slackened, though my pardon
No way assured. But conjugal affection,
Prevailing over fear and timorous doubt,
Hath led me on, desirous to behold
Once more thy face, and know of thy estate,
If aught in my ability may serve
To lighten what thou sufferest, and appease
Thy mind with what amends is in my power,
Though late, yet in some part to recompense
My rash but more unfortunate misdeed.

SAMSON.

Out, out, hyena! these are thy wonted arts,
And arts of every woman false like thee,
To break all faith, all vows, deceive, betray,
Then as repentant to submit, beseech,
And reconcilement move with feigned remorse;
Confess, and promise wonders in her change,
Not truly penitent, but chief to try
Her husband, how far urged his patience bears,
His virtue or weakness which way to assail:
Then with more cautious and instructed skill
Again transgresses, and again submits;
That wisest and best men full oft beguiled,
With goodness principled not to reject
The penitent, but ever to forgive,
Are drawn to wear out miserable days,



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SAMSON AGONISTES.

Out, out, Hyæna; these are thy wonted arts,
And arts of every woman false like thee.

Intangled with a poisonous bosom snake,
If not by quick destruction soon cut off
As I by thee, to ages an example.

DALILA.

Yet hear me, Samson; not that I endeavour
To lessen or extenuate my offence;
But that on the other side, if it be weighed
By itself, with aggravations not surcharged,
Or else with just allowance counterpoised,
I may, if possible, thy pardon find
The easier towards me, or thy hatred less.
First granting, as I do, it was a weakness
In me, but incident to all our sex,
Curiosity, inquisitive, importune
Of secrets, then, with like infirmity
To publish them, both common female faults:
Was it not weakness also to make known
For importunity, that is for nought,
Wherein consisted all thy strength and safety?
To what I did thou show'dst me first the way.
But I to enemies revealed, and should not:
Nor shouldst thou have trusted that to woman's frailty:
Ere I to thee, thou to thyself wast cruel.
Let weakness then with weakness come to parle,
So near related, or the same of kind,
Thine forgive mine; that men may censure thine
The gentler, if severely thou exact not
More strength from me, than in thyself was found.
And what if love, which thou interpret'st hate,
The jealousy of love, powerful of sway
In human hearts, nor less in mine towards thee,
Caused what I did? I saw thee mutable
Of fancy; feared lest one day thou wouldst leave me
As her at Timna, sought by all means therefore
How to endear, and hold thee to me firmest:
No better way I saw than by importuning
To learn thy secrets, get into my power
Thy key of strength and safety: thou wilt say,
Why then revealed? I was assured by those
Who tempted me, that nothing was designed
Against thee but safe custody, and hold:
That made for me; I knew that liberty
Would draw thee forth to perilous enterprises,
While I at home sat full of cares and fears,

Wailing thy absence in my widowed bed;
Here I should still enjoy thee day and night,
Mine and love's prisoner, not the Philistines;
Whole to myself, unhazarded abroad,
Fearless at home of partners in my love.
These reasons in love's law have passed for good,
Though fond and reasonless to some, perhaps;
And love hath oft, well meaning, wrought much woe,
Yet always pity or pardon hath obtained.
Be not unlike all others, not austere
As thou art strong, inflexible as steel
If thou in strength all mortals dost exceed,
In uncompassionate anger do not so.

SAMSON.

How cunningly the sorceress displays
Her own transgressions, to upbraid me mine!
That malice, not repentance, brought thee hither,
By this appears: I gave, thou say'st, the example;
I led the way; bitter reproach, but true;
I to myself was false ere thou to me;
Such pardon therefore as I give my folly,
Take to thy wicked deed; which when thou seest
Impartial, self-severe, inexorable,
Thou wilt renounce thy seeking, and much rather
Confess it feigned: weakness is thy excuse,
And I believe it; weakness to resist
Philistian gold: if weakness may excuse,
What murderer, what traitor, parricide,
Incestuous, sacrilegious, but may plead it?
All wickedness is weakness: that plea, therefore,
With God or man will gain thee no remission.
But love constrained thee; call it furious rage
To satisfy thy lust: love seeks to have love:
My love how couldst thou hope, who took'st the way
To raise in me inexpiable hate,
Knowing, as needs I must, by thee betrayed?[1]
In vain thou striv'st to cover shame with shame,
Or by evasions thy crime uncover'st more.

DALILA.

Since thou determin'st weakness for no plea
In man or woman, though to thy own condemning,
Hear what assaults I had, what snares besides,

[1] The same construction is in Paradise Lost, ix. 792:—
"And knew not eating death."

What sieges girt me round, ere I consented;
Which might have awed the best resolved of men,
The constantest, to have yielded without blame.
It was not gold, as to my charge thou lay'st,
That wrought with me: thou know'st the magistrates
And princes of my country came in person,
Solicited, commanded, threatened, urged,
Adjured by all the bonds of civil duty
And of religion; pressed how just it was,
How honourable, how glorious to entrap
A common enemy, who had destroyed
Such numbers of our nation: and the priest
Was not behind, but ever at my ear,
Preaching how meritorious with the gods
It would be to ensnare an irreligious
Dishonourer of Dagon: what had I
To oppose against such powerful arguments?
Only my love of thee held long debate,
And combated in silence all these reasons
With hard contest: at length that grounded maxim
So rife and celebrated in the mouths
Of wisest men, that to the public good
Private respect must yield, with grave authority
Took full possession of me and prevailed;
Virtue, as I thought, truth, duty, so enjoining.

SAMSON.

I thought where all thy circling wiles would end,
In feigned religion, smooth hypocrisy.
But had thy love, still odiously pretended,
Been, as it ought, sincere, it would have taught thee
Far other reasonings, brought forth other deeds.
I, before all the daughters of my tribe,
And of my nation, chose thee from among
My enemies, loved thee, as too well thou knew'st,
Too well, unbosomed all my secrets to thee,
Not out of levity, but overpowered
By thy request, who could deny thee nothing;
Yet now am judged an enemy. Why then
Didst thou at first receive me for thy husband,
Then, as since then, thy country's foe professed?
Being once a wife, for me thou wast to leave
Parents and country; nor was I their subject.
Nor under their protection but my own,
Thou mine, not theirs: if aught against my life

Thy country sought of thee, it sought unjustly,
Against the law of nature, law of nations,
No more thy country, but an impious crew
Of men conspiring to uphold their state
By worse than hostile deeds, violating the ends
For which our country is a name so dear;
Not therefore to be obeyed. But zeal moved thee
To please thy gods thou didst it: gods unable
To acquit themselves, and prosecute their foes
But by ungodly deeds, the contradiction
Of their own deity, gods cannot be;
Less therefore to be pleased, obeyed, or feared.
These false pretexts and varnished colours failing,
Bare in thy guilt how foul must thou appear!

DALILA.

In argument with men a woman ever
Goes by the worse, whatever be her cause

SAMSON.

For want of words, no doubt, or lack of breath;
Witness when I was worried with thy peals.

DALILA.

I was a fool, too rash, and quite mistaken
In what I thought would have succeeded best.
Let me obtain forgiveness of thee, Samson;
Afford me place to show what recompense
Towards thee I intend for what I have misdone,
Misguided; only what remains past cure
Bear not too sensibly, nor still insist
To afflict thyself in vain: though sight be lost,
Life yet hath many solaces, enjoyed
Where other senses want not their delights
At home in leisure and domestic ease,
Exempt from many a care and chance to which
Eyesight exposes daily men abroad.
I to the lords will intercede, not doubting
Their favourable ear, that I may fetch thee
From forth this loathsome prison-house, to abide
With me, where my redoubled love and care
With nursing diligence, to me glad office,
May ever tend about thee to old age
With all things grateful cheered, and so supplied,
That what by me thou hast lost thou least shalt miss

SAMSON.

No, no, of my condition take no care;

It fits not; thou and I long since are twain;
Nor think me so unwary or accursed,
To bring my feet again into the snare
Where once I have been caught; I know thy trains
Though dearly to my cost, thy gins, and toils;
Thy fair enchanted cup and warbling charms[1]
No more on me have power; their force is nulled,
So much of adder's wisdom[2] I have learned
To fence my ear against thy sorceries.
If in my flower of youth and strength, when all men
Loved, honoured, feared me, thou alone couldst hate me
Thy husband, slight me, sell me, and forego me,
How wouldst thou use me now, blind, and thereby
Deceivable in most things as a child
Helpless, thence easily contemned, and scorned,
And last neglected? How wouldst thou insult
When I must live uxorious to thy will
In perfect thraldom; how again betray me,
Bearing my words and doings to the lords
To gloss upon, and, censuring, frown or smile?
This jail I count the house of liberty
To thine, whose doors my feet shall never enter.

DALILA.

Let me approach at least, and touch thy hand

SAMSON.

Not for thy life, lest fierce remembrance wake
My sudden rage to tear thee joint by joint
At distance I forgive thee, go with that;
Bewail thy falsehood, and the pious works
It hath brought forth to make thee memorable
Among illustrious women, faithful wives:
Cherish thy hastened widowhood with the gold
Of matrimonial treason: so farewell.

DALILA.

I see thou art implacable, more deaf
To prayers than winds and seas; yet winds to seas
Are reconciled at length, and sea to shore:
Thy anger, unappeasable, still rages,
Eternal tempest never to be calmed.

[1] Alluding, no doubt, to the story of Circe and the Sirens; but did not our author's fondness for Greek learning make him here forget that it is a little out of character to represent Samson acquainted with the mythology of that country?—*Thyer.*

[2] See Psalm lviii. 4, 5.

Why do I humble thus myself, and, suing
For peace, reap nothing but repulse and hate?
Bid go with evil omen, and the brand
Of infamy upon my name denounced?
To mix with thy concernments I desist
Henceforth, nor too much disapprove my own.
Fame, if not double-faced, is double-mouthed,
And with contrary blast proclaims most deeds;
On both his[1] wings, one black, the other white,
Bears greatest names in his wild airy flight.
My name perhaps among the circumcised
In Dan, in Judah, and the bordering tribes,
To all posterity may stand defamed,
With malediction mentioned, and the blot
Of falsehood most unconjugal traduced.
But in my country where I most desire
(In Ecron, Gaza, Asdod, and in Gath),
I shall be named among the famousest
Of women, sung at solemn festivals,
Living and dead recorded, who, to save
Her country from a fierce destroyer, chose
Above the faith of wedlock bands; my tomb
With odours visited and annual flowers;[2]
Not less renowned than in Mount Ephraim
Jael, who with inhospitable guile
Smote Sisera sleeping through the temples nailed.
Nor shall I count it heinous to enjoy
The public marks of honour and reward
Conferred upon me, for the piety
Which to my country I was judged to have shown.
At this who ever envies or repines,
I leave him to his lot, and like my own.

CHORUS.

She's gone, a manifest serpent by her sting
Discovered in the end, till now concealed.

SAMSON

So let her go; God sent her to debase me,
And aggravate my folly, who committed
To such a viper his most sacred trust
Of secresy, my safety, and my life

[1] Fame is always a *goddess* in the classic poets; but our author has made the muse *masculine* in Lycidas.

[2] This would seem to have been an oriental custom, from what we read respecting the yearly lamentation for the daughter of Jephtha.

CHORUS.

Yet beauty, though injurious, hath strange powe
After offence returning, to regain
Love once possessed, nor can be easily
Repulsed without much inward passion felt,
And secret sting of amorous remorse.

SAMSON.

Love-quarrels oft in pleasing concord end.
Not wedlock-treachery endangering life.

CHORUS.

It is not virtue,[1] wisdom, valour, wit,
Strength, comeliness of shape, or amplest merit,
That woman's love can win or long inherit;
But what it is, hard is to say,
Harder to hit
(Which way soever men refer it);
Much like thy riddle, Samson, in one day
Or seven, though one should musing sit.
If any of these, or all, the Timnian bride
Had not so soon preferred
Thy paranymph,[2] worthless to thee compared,
Successor in thy bed,
Nor both so loosely disallied
Their nuptials, nor this last so treacherously
Had shorn the fatal harvest of thy head.
Is it for that such outward ornament
Was lavished on their sex, that inward gifts
Were left for haste unfinished, judgment scant,
Capacity not raised to apprehend
Or value what is best
In choice, but oftest to affect the wrong?
Or was too much of self-love mixed,
Of constancy no root infixed,
That either they love nothing, or not long?
Whate'er it be, to wisest men and best

[1] However just the observation may be, that Milton, in his Paradise Lost, seems to court the favour of the female sex, it is very certain that he did not carry the same complaisance into this performance. What the chorus here says outgoes the very bitterest satire of Euripides.—*Thyer.*

It will be recollected that Milton's own domestic life was not a happy one, and that some of the bitterness with which this poem is fraught may be traced to that cause.

[2] Brideman. Cf. Judges xiv. 20.

Seeming at first all heavenly under virgin veil,
Soft, modest, meek, demure,
Once joined, the contrary she proves, a thorn
Intestine, far within defensive arms
A cleaving mischief,[1] in his way to virtue
Adverse and turbulent, or by her charms
Draws him awry enslaved
With dotage, and his sense depraved
To folly and shameful deeds which ruin ends.
What pilot so expert but needs must wreck
Embarked with such a steers-mate at the helm?
Favoured of Heaven who finds
One virtuous rarely found,
That in domestic good combines;
Happy that house! his way to peace is smooth:
But virtue, which breaks through all opposition,
Most shines, and most is acceptable above.
Therefore God's universal law
Gave to the man despotic power
Over his female in due awe,
Nor from that right to part an hour,
Smile she or lour;
So shall he least confusion draw
On his whole life, not swayed
By female usurpation, or dismayed.
But had we best retire? I see a storm.

SAMSON.

Fair days have oft contracted wind and rain

CHORUS

But this another kind of tempest brings.

SAMSON

Be less abstruse: my riddling days are past.

CHORUS

Look now for no enchanting voice, nor fear
The bait of honeyed words: a rougher tongue
Draws hitherward; I know him by his stride;
The giant Harapha of Gath; his look
Haughty as is his pile high-built and proud.
Comes he in peace? What wind hath blown him hither
I less conjecture than when first I saw
The sumptuous Dalila floating this way:
His habit carries peace, his brow defiance.

[1] An allusion to the poisoned garment sent to Hercules by Deianira.

SAMSON.

Or peace or not, alike to me he comes.

CHORUS.

His fraught we soon shall know: he now arrives.

HARAPHA.

I come not, Samson, to condole thy chance,
As these perhaps, yet wish it had not been,
Though for no friendly intent. I am of Gath;
Men call me Harapha,[1] of stock renowned
As Og or Anak, and the Emims old
That Kiriathaim[2] held: thou know'st me now,
If thou at all art known. Much I have heard
Of thy prodigious might, and feats performed
Incredible to me; in this displeased,
That I was never present on the place
Of those encounters, where we might have tried
Each other's force in camp or listed field;
And now am come to see of whom such noise
Hath walked about, and each limb to survey,
If thy appearance answer loud report.

SAMSON.

The way to know were not to see but taste.

HARAPHA.

Dost thou already single me? I thought
Gyves[3] and the mill had tamed thee. Oh, that fortune
Had brought me to the field, where thou art famed
To have wrought such wonders with an ass's jaw!
I should have forced thee soon with other arms,
Or left thy carcass where the ass lay thrown:
So had the glory of prowess been recovered
To Palestine, won by a Philistine
From the unforeskinned race, of whom thou bear'st
The highest name for valiant acts; that honour
Certain to have won by mortal duel from thee,
I lose, prevented by thy eyes put out.

SAMSON.

Boast not of what thou wouldst have done, but do
What then thou wouldst; thou seest it in thy hand.

[1] This character is fictitious, but is properly introduced by the poet, and not without some foundation in Scripture. Arapha, or rather Rapha (says Calmet), was father of the giants of Rephaim. The word Rapha may likewise signify simply a giant.—*Newton.*

[2] Cf. Genes. xiv. 5.

[3] Fetters.

HARAPHA.

To combat with a blind man I disdain,
And thou hast need much washing to be touched.

SAMSON.

Such usage as your honourable lords
Afford me, assassinated and betrayed,
Who durst not with their whole united powers
In fight withstand me single and unarmed,
Nor in the house with chamber ambushes
Close-banded durst attack me, no, not sleeping,
Till they had hired a woman with their gold,
Breaking her marriage faith to circumvent me.
Therefore, without feigned shifts, let be assigned
Some narrow place enclosed, where sight may give thee,
Or rather flight, no great advantage on me;
Then put on all thy gorgeous arms, thy helmet
And brigandine[1] of brass, thy broad habergeon,[2]
Vant-brass[3] and greaves,[4] and gauntlet, add thy spear,
A weaver's beam,[5] and seven-times-folded shield,
I only with an oaken staff will meet thee,
And raise such outcries on thy clattered iron,
Which long shall not withhold me from thy head,
That in a little time while breath remains thee,
Thou oft shalt wish thyself at Gath, to boast
Again in safety what thou wouldst have done
To Samson, but shalt never see Gath more.

HARAPHA.

Thou durst not thus disparage glorious arms,
Which greatest heroes have in battle worn,
Their ornament and safety, had not spells[6]
And black enchantments, some magician's art, [Heaven
Armed thee, or charmed thee strong, which thou from
Feign'dst at thy birth was given thee in thy hair,
Where strength can least abide, though all thy hairs
Were bristles, ranged like those that ridge the back
Of chafed wild boars, or ruffled porcupines.[7]

[1] A coat of mail. See Jer. xlvi. 4; li. 3.
[2] A coat of mail for the neck and shoulders.
[3] Or vantbrace, *avant bras*, armour for the arms.
[4] Armour for the legs.
[5] Like Goliath's, 1 Sam. xvii. 7.
[6] This notion is probably adopted from some of the Italian epic poets, who are fond of representing their heroes achieving victory, or saved from danger, by the use of such doubtful means.
[7] Evidently from the "fretted porcupine" of Shakspeare.

SAMSON.

I know no spells, use no forbidden arts;
My trust is in the living God, who gave me
At my nativity this strength, diffused
No less through all my sinews, joints, and bones,
Than thine, while I preserved these locks unshorn,
The pledge of my unviolated vow.
For proof hereof, if Dagon be thy god,
Go to his temple, invocate his aid
With solemnest devotion, spread before him
How highly it concerns his glory now
To frustrate and dissolve these magic spells,
Which I to be the power of Israel's God
Avow, and challenge Dagon to the test,
Offering to combat thee his champion bold,
With the utmost of his godhead seconded:
Then thou shalt see, or rather to thy sorrow
Soon feel, whose God is strongest, thine or mi

HARAPHA.

Presume not on thy God, whate'er he be;
Thee he regards not, owns not, hath cut off
Quite from his people, and delivered up
Into thy enemies' hand, permitted them
To put out both thine eyes, and fettered send thee
Into the common prison, there to grind
Among the slaves and asses, thy comrades,
As good for nothing else, no better service
With those thy boisterous locks, no worthy match
For valour to assail, nor by the sword
Of noble warrior, so to stain his honour,
But by the barber's razor best subdued.

SAMSON.

All these indignities, for such they are
From thine, these evils I deserve and more,
Acknowledge them from God inflicted on me
Justly, yet despair not of his final pardon
Whose ear is ever open, and his eye
Gracious to re-admit the suppliant;
In confidence whereof I once again
Defy thee to the trial of mortal fight,
By combat to decide whose God is God,
Thine or whom I with Israel's sons adore.

HARAPHA.

Fair honour that thou dost thy God, in trusting

He will accept thee to defend his cause,
A murderer, a revolter, and a robber.

SAMSON.

Tongue-doughty giant,[1] how dost thou prove me these?

HARAPHA.

Is not thy nation subject to our lords?
Their magistrates confessed it, when they took thee
As a league-breaker, and delivered bound
Into our hands: for hadst thou not committed
Notorious murder on those thirty men
At Ascalon, who never did thee harm,
Then, like a robber, stripp'dst them of their robes?
The Philistines, when thou hadst broke the league,
Went up with armed power thee only seeking,
To others did no violence nor spoil.

SAMSON.

Among the daughters of the Philistines
I chose a wife, which argued me no foe;
And in your city held my nuptial feast:
But your ill-meaning politician lords,
Under pretence of bridal friends and guests,
Appointed to await me thirty spies,
Who threatening cruel death constrained the bride
To wring from me and tell to them my secret,
That solved the riddle which I had proposed.
When I perceived all set on enmity,
As on my enemies, wherever chanced,
I used hostility, and took their spoil
To pay my underminers in their coin.
My nation was subjected to your lords;
It was the force of conquest; force with force
Is well ejected when the conquered can.
But I, a private person, whom my country
As a league-breaker gave up bound, presumed
Single rebellion, and did hostile acts.
I was no private, but a person raised
With strength sufficient and command from Heaven
To free my country; if their servile minds
Me their deliverer sent would not receive,
But to their masters gave me up for nought,
The unworthier they; whence to this day they serve.
I was to do my part from Heaven assigned,
And had performed it, if my known offence

[1] Speech-valiant.

Had not disabled me, not all your force:
These shifts refuted, answer thy appellant
Though by his blindness maimed for high attempts,
Who now defies thee thrice[1] to single fight,
As a petty enterprise of small enforce.

HARAPHA.

With thee! a man condemned, a slave enrolled.
Due by the law to capital punishment?
To fight with thee no man of arms will deign.

SAMSON.

Cam'st thou for this, vain boaster, to survey me,
To descant on my strength, and give thy verdict?
Come nearer, part not hence so slight informed;
But take good heed my hand survey not thee.

HARAPHA.

O Baal-zebub! can my ears unused
Hear these dishonours, and not render death?

SAMSON.

No man withholds thee, nothing from thy hand
Fear I incurable; bring up thy van,
My heels are fettered, but my fist is free.

HARAPHA.

This insolence other kind of answer fits.

SAMSON.

Go, baffled coward! lest I run upon thee,
Though in these chains, bulk without spirit vast,
And with one buffet lay thy structure low,
Or swing thee in the air, then dash thee down
To the hazard of thy brains and shattered sides

HARAPHA.

By Astaroth! ere long thou shalt lament
These braveries in irons loaden on thee.

CHORUS.

His giantship is gone somewhat crest-fallen,
Stalking with less unconscionable strides,
And lower looks, but in a sultry chafe.

SAMSON.

I dread him not, nor all his giant brood,
Though fame divulge him father of five sons,
All of gigantic size, Goliah chief.

CHORUS.

He will directly to the lords, I fear,

[1] The usual number in the chivalrous adventures of the middle ages.

And with malicious counsel stir them up
Some way or other yet further to afflict thee.

SAMSON.

He must allege some cause, and offered fight
Will not dare mention, lest a question rise
Whether he durst accept the offer or not,
And that he durst not plain enough appeared
Much more affliction than already felt
They cannot well impose, nor I sustain;
If they intend advantage of my labours,
The work of many hands, which earns my keeping
With no small profit daily to my owners.
But come what will, my deadliest foe will prove
My speediest friend, by death to rid me hence:
The worst that he can give, to me the best.
Yet so it may fall out, because their end
Is hate, not help to me, it may with mine
Draw their own ruin who attempt the deed.

CHORUS.

Oh, how comely it is, and how reviving
To the spirits of just men long oppressed!
When God into the hands of their deliverer
Puts invincible might
To quell the mighty of the earth, the oppressor,
The brute and boisterous force of violent men
Hardy and industrious to support
Tyrannic power, but raging to pursue
The righteous and all such as honour truth;
He all their ammunition
And feats of war defeats
With plain heroic magnitude of mind
And celestial vigour armed,
Their armouries and magazines contemns,
Renders them useless, while
With wingéd expedition,
Swift as the lightning glance, he executes
His errand on the wicked, who, surprised,
Lose their defence, distracted and amazed.
But patience is more oft the exercise
Of saints, the trial of their fortitude,
Making them each his own deliverer,
And victor over all
That tyranny or fortune can inflict.
Either of these is in thy lot,

Samson, with might endued
Above the sons of men; but sight bereaved
May chance to number thee with those
Whom patience finally must crown.
This idol's day hath been to thee no day of rest,
Labouring thy mind
More than the working day thy hands.
And yet, perhaps, more trouble is behind,
For I descry this way
Some other tending, in his hand
A sceptre or quaint staff he bears,
Comes on amain, speed in his look.
By his habit I discern him now
A public officer, and now at hand.
His message will be short and voluble.

OFFICER.

Hebrews, the prisoner Samson here I seek.

CHORUS.

His manacles remark him,[1] there he sits

OFFICER.

Samson, to thee our lords thus bid me say:
This day to Dagon is a solemn feast,
With sacrifices, triumph, pomp, and games;
Thy strength they know surpassing human rate,
And now some public proof thereof require
To honour this great feast, and great assembly;
Rise therefore with all speed, and come along,
Where I will see thee heartened and fresh clad,
To appear as fits before the illustrious lords.

SAMSON.

Thou know'st I am an Hebrew, therefore tell them,
Our law forbids at their religious rites
My presence; for that cause I cannot come.

OFFICER.

This answer, be assured, will not content them.

SAMSON.

Have they not sword-players, and every sort
Of gymnic artists, wrestlers, riders, runners,
Jugglers and dancers, antics, mummers, mimics,
But they must pick me out with shackles tired,
And over-laboured at their public mill,
To make them sport with blind activity?
Do they not seek occasion of new quarrels

[1] Point him out.

On my refusal to distress me more,
Or make a game of my calamities?
Return the way thou cam'st, I will not come.

OFFICER.

Regard thyself: this will offend them highly

SAMSON.

Myself? my conscience and internal peace.
Can they think me so broken, so debased
With corporal servitude, that my mind ever
Will condescend to such absurd commands?
Although their drudge, to be their fool or jester,
And in my midst of sorrow and heart-grief
To show them feats, and play before their god,
The worst of all indignities, yet on me
Joined with extreme contempt? I will not come.

OFFICER.

My message was imposed on me with speed,
Brooks no delay; is this thy resolution?

SAMSON.

So take it with what speed thy message needs.

OFFICER.

I am sorry what this stoutness will produce.

SAMSON.

Perhaps thou shalt have cause to sorrow indeed

CHORUS.

Consider, Samson; matters now are strained
Up to the highth, whether to hold or break;
He's gone, and who knows how he may report
Thy words by adding fuel to the flame?
Expect another message more imperious,
More lordly thundering than thou well wilt bear

SAMSON.

Shall I abuse this consecrated gift
Of strength, again returning with my hair
After my great transgression; so requite
Favour renewed, and add a greater sin
By prostituting holy things to idols?
A Nazarite in place abominable
Vaunting my strength in honour to their Dagon?
Besides how vile, contemptible, ridiculous,
What act more execrably unclean, profane?

CHORUS.

Yet with this strength thou serv'st the Philistines
Idolatrous, uncircumcised, unclean

SAMSON.

Not in their idol-worship, but by labour
Honest and lawful to deserve my food
Of those who have me in their civil power

CHORUS.

Where the heart joins not, outward acts defile not.

SAMSON.

Where outward force constrains, the sentence holds
But who constrains me to the temple of Dagon,
Not dragging? The Philistian lords command:
Commands are no restraints. If I obey them,
I do it freely, venturing to displease
God for the fear of man, and man prefer,
Set God behind; which in his jealousy
Shall never, unrepented, find forgiveness.
Yet that he may dispense[1] with me or thee
Present in temples at idolatrous rites
For some important cause, thou need'st not doubt

CHORUS.

How thou wilt here come off surmounts my reach.

SAMSON.

Be of good courage, I begin to feel
Some rousing motions in me which dispose
To something extraordinary my thoughts.
I with this messenger will go along,
Nothing to do, be sure, that may dishonour
Our law, or stain my vow of Nazarite.
If there be aught of presage in the mind,
This day will be remarkable in my life
By some great act, or of my days the last.

CHORUS.

In time thou hast resolved, the man returns.

OFFICER.

Samson, this second message from our lords
To thee I am bid say. Art thou our slave,
Our captive, at the public mill our drudge,
And dar'st thou at our sending and command
Dispute thy coming? Come without delay;
Or we shall find such engines to assail
And hamper thee, as thou shalt come of force,
Though thou wert firmlier fastened than a rock

[1] Perhaps in reference to the story of Naaman the Syrian begging a similar dispensation from Elisha. See 2 Kings v. 18 sq.—*Thyer.*

SAMSON.

I could be well content to try their art,
Which to no few of them would prove pernicious.
Yet knowing their advantages too many,
Because they shall not trail me through their streets
Like a wild beast, I am content to go.
Masters' commands[1] come with a power resistless
To such as owe them absolute subjection;
And for a life who will not change his purpose?
(So mutable are all the ways of men)
Yet this be sure, in nothing to comply
Scandalous or forbidden in our law.

OFFICER.

I praise thy resolution; doff these links:
By this compliance thou wilt win the lords
To favour, and perhaps to set thee free.

SAMSON.

Brethren, farewell; your company along
I will not wish, lest it perhaps offend them
To see me girt with friends; and how the sight
Of me as of a common enemy,
So dreaded once, may now exasperate them
I know not. Lords are lordliest in their wine;
And the well-feasted priest then soonest fired
With zeal, if aught religion seem concerned;
No less the people on their holy-days
Impetuous, insolent, unquench able:
Happen what may, of me expect to hear
Nothing dishonourable, impure, unworthy
Our God, our law, my nation, or myself,
The last of me or no I cannot warrant.

CHORUS.

Go, and the Holy One
Of Israel be thy guide
To what may serve his glory best, and spread his name
Great among the heathen round;
Send thee the angel of thy birth, to stand
Fast by thy side, who from thy father's field
Rode up in flames after his message told
Of thy conception, and be now a shield
Of fire; that Spirit that first rushed on thee

[1] This was a feint, but it had betrayed itself had it not been covered by ver. 1408.—*Warburton.*

In the camp of Dan
Be efficacious in thee now at need.
For never was from Heaven imparted
Measure of strength so great to mortal seed,
As in thy wondrous actions hath been seen.
But wherefore comes old Manoah in such haste
With youthful steps? much livelier than erewhile
He seems; supposing here to find his son,
Or of him bringing to us some glad news?

MANOAH.

Peace with you, brethren; my inducement hither
Was not at present here to find my son,
By order of the lords new parted hence
To come and play before them at their feast.
I heard all as I came, the city rings,
And numbers thither flock, I had no will,
Lest I should see him forced to things unseemly.
But that which moved my coming now, was chiefly
To give ye part with me what hope I have
With good success to work his liberty

CHORUS.

That hope would much rejoice us to partake
With thee; say, reverend sire, we thirst to hear

MANOAH.

I have attempted one by one the lords
Either at home, or through the high street passing,
With supplication prone and father's tears,
To accept of ransom for my son their prisoner.
Some much averse I found and wondrous harsh,
Contemptuous, proud, set on revenge and spite;
That part most reverenced Dagon and his priests:
Others more moderate seeming, but their aim
Private reward, for which both god and state
They easily would set to sale; a third
More generous far and civil, who confessed
They had enough revenged, having reduced
Their foe to misery beneath their fears,
The rest was magnanimity to remit,
If some convenient ransom were proposed.
What noise or shout was that? it tore the sky

CHORUS.

Doubtless the people shouting to behold
Their once great dread, captive and blind before them,
Or at some proof of strength before them shown.

MANOAH.

His ransom, if my whole inheritance
May compass it, shall willingly be paid
And numbered down: much rather I shall choose
To live the poorest in my tribe, than richest,
And he in that calamitous prison left.
No, I am fixed not to part hence without him.
For his redemption all my patrimony,
If need be, I am ready to forego
And quit: not wanting him, I shall want nothing

CHORUS.

Fathers are wont to lay up for their sons,
Thou for thy son art bent to lay out all;
Sons wont to nurse their parents in old age,
Thou in old age car'st how to nurse thy son,
Made older than thy age through eyesight lost

MANOAH.

It shall be my delight to tend his eyes,
And view him sitting in the house, ennobled
With all those high exploits by him achieved,
And on his shoulders waving down those locks,
That of a nation armed the strength contained;
And I persuade me God had not permitted
His strength again to grow up with his hair
Garrisoned round about him like a camp
Of faithful soldiery, were not his purpose
To use him further yet in some great service,
Not to sit idle with so great a gift
Useless, and thence ridiculous about him.
And since his strength with eyesight was not lost,
God will restore him eyesight to his strength

CHORUS.

Thy hopes are not ill-founded, nor seem vain
Of his delivery, and thy joy thereon
Conceived, agreeable to a father's love,
In both which we, as next, participate

MANOAH.

I know your friendly minds, and—Oh, what noise!
Mercy of Heaven! what hideous noise was that?
Horribly loud, unlike the former shout.

CHORUS.

Noise call you it, or universal groan,
As if the whole inhabitation perished!

Blood, death, and deathful deeds are in that noise,
Ruin, destruction at the utmost point.

MANOAH.

Of ruin, indeed, methought I heard the noise:
Oh! it continues; they have slain my son!

CHORUS.

Thy son is rather slaying them; that outcry
From slaughter of one foe could not ascend.

MANOAH.

Some dismal accident it needs must be:
What shall we do, stay here or run and see?

CHORUS.

Best keep together here, lest running thither
We unawares run into danger's mouth.
This evil on the Philistines is fallen;
From whom could else a general cry be heard?
The sufferers then will scarce molest us here,
From other hands we need not much to fear
What if his eyesight (for to Israel's God
Nothing is hard) by miracle restored,
He now be dealing dole among his foes,[1]
And over heaps of slaughtered walk his way?

MANOAH.

That were a joy presumptuous to be thought

CHORUS.

Yet God hath wrought things as incredible
For his people of old; what hinders now?

MANOAH.

He can, I know, but doubt to think he will;
Yet hope would fain subscribe, and tempts belief.
A little stay will bring some notice hither.

CHORUS.

Of good or bad so great, of bad the sooner;[2]
For evil news rides post, while good news baits
And to our wish I see one hither speeding,
An Hebrew, as I guess, and of our tribe

MESSENGER.

Oh, whither shall I run, or which way fly
The sight of this so horrid spectacle,
Which erst my eyes beheld and yet behold?

[1] Distributing his gifts and portions among his enemies.

[2] Calton would assign the words, "of bad the sooner; for evil news rides post, while good news baits"—to Manoah, and the two following lines to the chorus.

For dire imagination still pursues me.
But providence or instinct of nature seems,
Or reason though disturbed, and scarce consulted,
To have guided me aright, I know not how,
To thee first, reverend Manoah, and to these
My countrymen, whom here I knew remaining
As at some distance from the place of horror,
So in the sad event too much concerned.

MANOAH.

The accident was loud, and here before thee
With rueful cry, yet what it was we hear not;
No preface needs,[1] thou seest we long to know.

MESSENGER.

It would burst forth, but I recover breath
And sense distract, to know well what I utter

MANOAH.

Tell us the sum; the circumstance defer

MESSENGER.

Gaza yet stands, but all her sons are fallen;
All in a moment overwhelmed and fallen.

MANOAH.

Sad, but thou know'st to Israelites not saddest,
The desolation of a hostile city.

MESSENGER.

Feed on that first: there may in grief be surfeit.

MANOAH.

Relate by whom?

MESSENGER.

By Samson

MANOAH.

That still lessens
The sorrow, and converts it nigh to joy.

MESSENGER.

Ah! Manoah, I refrain too suddenly
To utter what will come at last too soon;
Lest evil tidings with too rude irruption
Hitting thy aged ear should pierce too deep.

MANOAH.

Suspense in news is torture; speak them out.

MESSENGER.

Take then the worst in brief; Samson is dead!

MANOAH.

The worst indeed. Oh, all my hope's defeated

[1] Is wanting, as in Paradise Lost, x. 80.

To free him hence! but death, who sets all free,
Hath paid his ransom now and full discharge.
What windy joy this day had I conceived,
Hopeful of his delivery, which now proves
Abortive as the first-born bloom of spring[1]
Nipped with the lagging rear of winter's frost!
Yet ere I give the reins to grief, say first,
How died he? death to life is crown or shame
All by him fell, thou say'st; by whom fell he?
What glorious hand gave Samson his death's wound?

MESSENGER.

Unwounded of his enemies he fell.

MANOAH.

Wearied with slaughter then, or how? explain.

MESSENGER.

By his own hands.

MANOAH.

Self-violence? What cause
Brought him so soon at variance with himself
Among his foes?

MESSENGER.

Inevitable cause
At once both to destroy and be destroyed.
The edifice, where all were met to see him,
Upon their heads and on his own he pulled

MANOAH.

O lastly over-strong against thyself!
A dreadful way thou took'st to thy revenge.
More than enough we know; but while things yet
Are in confusion, give us, if thou canst,
Eye-witness of what first or last was done,
Relation more particular and distinct

MESSENGER.

Occasions drew me early to this city,
And as the gates I entered with sunrise,

[1] Warburton has noticed the imitation of Shakspeare, Henry VIII., act iii. sc. 6:—

"This is the state of man; to-day he puts forth
The tender leaves of hope, to-morrow blossoms,
And bears his blushing honours thick upon him;
The third day comes a frost, a killing frost;
And when he thinks, good easy man, full surely
His greatness is a ripening, nips his root;
And then he falls, as I do."

The morning trumpets festival proclaimed
Through each high street: little I had despatched,
When all abroad was rumoured that this day
Samson should be brought forth, to show the people
Proof of his mighty strength in feats and games;
I sorrowed at his captive state, but minded
Not to be absent at that spectacle.
The building was a spacious theatre,
Half round, on two main pillars vaulted high,
With seats where all the lords and each degree
Of sort, might sit in order to behold;
The other side was open, where the throng
On banks and scaffolds under sky might stand,
I among these aloof obscurely stood.
The feast and noon grew high, and sacrifice
Had filled their hearts with mirth, high cheer, and wine,
When to their sports they turned. Immediately
Was Samson as a public servant brought,
In their state livery clad: before him pipes
And timbrels; on each side went armed guards,
Both horse and foot; before him and behind,
Archers and slingers, cataphracts[1] and spears.
At sight of him the people with a shout
Rifted the air, clamouring their god with praise,
Who had made their dreadful enemy their thrall.
He, patient but undaunted, where they led him,
Came to the place, and what was set before him,
Which without help of eye might be assayed,
To heave, pull, draw, or break, he still performed
All with incredible, stupendous force,
None daring to appear antagonist.
At length for intermission sake they led him
Between the pillars; he his guide requested
(For so from such as nearer stood we heard),
As overtired, to let him lean awhile
With both his arms on those two massy pillars,
That to the arched roof gave main support.
He, unsuspicious, led him; which when Samson
Felt in his arms, with head awhile inclined,
And eyes fast fixed, he stood, as one who prayed,
Or some great matter in his mind revolved:
At last, with head erect, thus cried aloud:

[1] Men or horses fully equipped.

" Hitherto, lords, what your commands imposed
I have performed, as reason was, obeying,
Not without wonder or delight beheld:
Now, of my own accord, such other trial
I mean to show you of my strength, yet greater,
As with amaze shall strike all who behold."
This uttered, straining all his nerves he bowed,
As with the force of winds and waters pent,
When mountains tremble, those two massy pillars
With horrible convulsion to and fro
He tugged, he shook, till down they came and drew
The whole roof after them, with burst of thunder,
Upon the heads of all who sat beneath,
Lords, ladies, captains, counsellors, or priests,
Their choice nobility and flower, not only
Of this but each Philistian city round
Met from all parts to solemnize this feast.
Samson, with these immixed, inevitably
Pulled down the same destruction on himself,
The vulgar only 'scaped who stood without.

CHORUS.

Oh, dearly bought revenge, yet glorious!
Living or dying thou hast fulfilled
The work for which thou wast foretold
To Israel, and now liest victorious
Among thy slain, self-killed,
Not willingly, but tangled in the fold
Of dire necessity, whose law in death conjoined
Thee with thy slaughtered foes in number more
Than all thy life had slain before.[1]

SEMICHORUS.

While their hearts were jocund and sublime,
Drunk with idolatry, drunk with wine,
And fat regorged of bulls and goats,
Chanting their idol, and preferring
Before our living Dread who dwells
In Silo, his bright sanctuary;
Among them he a spirit of frenzy sent,
Who hurt their minds,
And urged them on with mad desire
To call in haste for their destroyer;
They, only set on sport and play,

[1] Judges xvi. 30.

Unweetingly importuned
Their own destruction to come speedy upon them.
So fond are mortal men,
Fallen into wrath divine,
As their own ruin on themselves to invite,
Insensate left, or to sense reprobate,
And with blindness internal struck.

SEMICHORUS.

But he, though blind of sight,
Despised and thought extinguished quite,
With inward eyes illuminated,
His fiery virtue roused
From under ashes into sudden flame;
And as an evening dragon came,
Assailant on the perched roosts,
And nests in order ranged
Of tame villatic fowl;[1] but as an eagle
His cloudless thunder bolted on their heads.
So virtue given for lost,
Depressed, and overthrown, as seemed,
Like that self-begotten bird,
In the Arabian woods imbost,[2]
That no second knows nor third,
And lay erewhile a holocaust,
From out her ashy womb now teemed,
Revives, reflourishes, then vigorous most
When most unactive deemed,
And though her body die, her fame survives,
A secular bird, ages of lives.

MANOAH.

Come, come! no time for lamentation now;
Nor much more cause; Samson hath quit himself
Like Samson, and heroically hath finished
A life heroic, on his enemies
Fully revenged, hath left them years of mourning
And lamentation to the sons of Caphtor[3]
Through all Philistian bounds; to Israel
Honour hath left, and freedom, let but them

[1] Barn-door, farm-house fowls.

[2] Concealed, covered. Johnson is very sharp upon our author for the incongruity of this allusion to the Phœnix. See Rambler, No. 140.

[3] The Philistines.

Find courage to lay hold on this occasion;
To himself and father's house eternal fame;
And which is best and happiest yet, all this
With God not parted from him, as was feared,
But favouring and assisting to the end.
Nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail
Or knock the breast; no weakness, no contempt,
Dispraise, or blame; nothing but well and fair,
And what may quiet us in a death so noble.
Let us go find the body where it lies
Soaked in his enemies' blood; and from the stream,
With lavers pure, and cleansing herbs, wash off
The clotted gore. I with what speed the while
(Gaza is not in plight to say us nay)
Will send for all my kindred,[1] all my friends,
To fetch him hence, and solemnly attend
With silent obsequy and funeral train
Home to his father's house: there will I build him
A monument, and plant it round with shade
Of laurel ever green, and branching palm,
With all his trophies hung, and acts enrolled
In copious legend, or sweet lyric song.
Thither shall all the valiant youth resort,
And from his memory inflame their breasts
To matchless valour, and adventures high;
The virgins also shall, on feastful days,
Visit his tomb with flowers, only bewailing
His lot unfortunate in nuptial choice,
From whence captivity and loss of eyes.

CHORUS.

All is best, though we oft doubt,
What the unsearchable dispose
Of highest wisdom brings about,
And ever best found in the close.
Oft he seems to hide his face,
But unexpectedly returns,
And to his faithful champion hath in place
Bore witness gloriously; whence Gaza mourns,
And all that band them to resist
His uncontrollable intent;
His servants he, with new acquist[2]

[1] See Judges xvi. 31.
[2] Acquisition.

Of true experience from this great event,
With peace and consolation hath dismissed,
And calm of mind all passion spent.[1]

[1] On the conclusion of this tragedy, Dr. Johnson has the following remarks:—"While Samson is conducted off by the messenger, his father returns with hopes of success in his solicitation; upon which he confers with the chorus till their dialogue is interrupted, first by a shout, and afterwards by screams of horror and agony. As they stand deliberating where they shall be secure, a man who had been present at the show enters, and relates how Samson, having prevailed on his guide to suffer him to lean against the main pillars of the theatrical edifice, tore down the roof upon the spectators and himself. This is undoubtedly a just and regular catastrophe, and the poem therefore has a beginning and an end which Aristotle himself could not have disapproved; but it must be allowed to want a middle, since nothing passes between the first act and the last, that either hastens or delays the death of Samson. The whole drama, if its superfluities were cut off, would scarcely fill a single act; yet this is the tragedy, which ignorance has admired, and bigotry applauded."—*Rambler*, No. 139.

END OF SAMSON AGONISTES.

Poems on Several Occasions.

"Baccare frontem
Cingite, ne vati noceat mala lingua futuro.
VIRGIL, Eclog. 7.

I.

ANNO ÆTATIS XVII.

ON THE DEATH OF A FAIR INFANT[1] DYING OF A COUGH.

I.

O fairest flower! no sooner blown but blasted,
Soft silken primrose fading timelessly,
Summer's chief honour, if thou hadst out-lasted
Bleak Winter's force that made thy blossom dry;
For he being amorous on that lovely dye
That did thy cheek envermeil, thought to kiss,
But killed, alas! and then bewailed his fatal bliss

II.

For since grim Aquilo, his charioteer,
By boisterous rape the Athenian damsel[2] got,
He thought it touched his deity full near,
If likewise he some fair one wedded not,
Thereby to wipe away the infamous blot
Of long-uncoupled bed, and childless eld,[3]
Which 'mongst the wanton gods a foul reproach was held.

III.

So mounting up in icy-pearléd car,
Through middle empire of the freezing air
He wandered long, till thee he spied from far;

[1] The daughter, and probably the first child, of the poet's sister.
[2] Orithyia, daughter of Erectheus, king of Athens, was drowned while crossing the Ilissus in a high wind: hence the fable that she was carried off by Boreas or Aquilo.
[3] Old age.

There ended was his quest, there ceased his care.
Down he descended from his snow-soft chair,
But all unwares with his cold-kind embrace
Unhoused thy virgin soul from her fair biding place.[1]

IV.

Yet art thou not inglorious in thy fate;
For so Apollo, with unweeting hand,
Whilome did slay[2] his dearly-lovéd mate,
Young Hyacinth, born on Eurotas' strand,
Young Hyacinth, the pride of Spartan land;
But then transformed him to a purple flower:
Alack! that so to change thee Winter had no power.

V.

Yet can I not persuade me thou art dead,
Or that thy corse corrupts in earth's dark womb,
Or that thy beauties lie in wormy bed,
Hid from the world in a low-delvéd tomb;
Could Heaven for pity thee so strictly doom?
Oh, no! for something in thy face did shine
Above mortality, that showed thou wast divine.

VI.

Resolve me then, O soul most surely blest!
(If so it be that thou these plaints dost hear);
Tell me, bright spirit, where'er thou hoverest,
Whether above that high first-moving sphere,
Or in the Elysian fields (if such there were);
Oh, say me true, if thou wert mortal wight,
And why from us so quickly thou didst take thy flight?

VII.

Wert thou some star which from the ruined roof
Of shaked Olympus by mischance didst[3] fall;
Which careful Jove in nature's true behoof
Took up, and in fit place did reinstal?
Or did of late earth's sons besiege the wall
Of sheeny Heaven, and thou some goddess fled
Amongst us here below to hide thy nectared[4] head?

VIII.

Or wert thou that just maid[5] who once before
Forsook the hated earth, oh, tell me sooth!

[1] The legend of the Erl King will probably suggest itself to many readers as a parallel to this graceful fiction of Milton's.
[2] While playing at quoits.
[3] Rather, "*did* fall."
[4] "Nectared" here seems equivalent to "divine."
[5] Astræa, the goddess of justice.

And cam'st again to visit us once more?
Or wert thou that sweet smiling youth?[1]
Or that crowned matron sage, white-robéd Truth?
Or any other of that heavenly brood
Let down in cloudy throne to do the world some good?

IX.

Or wert thou of the golden-wingéd host,
Who, having clad thyself in human weed,
To earth from thy prefixéd seat didst post,
And after short abode fly back with speed,
As if to show what creatures Heaven doth breed,
Thereby to set the hearts of men on fire,
To scorn the sordid world, and unto Heaven aspire?

X.

But oh! why didst thou not stay here below
To bless us with thy Heaven-loved innocence,
To slake his wrath whom sin hath made our foe,
To turn swift-rushing black perdition hence,
Or drive away the slaughtering pestilence,[2]
To stand 'twixt us and our deservéd smart?
But thou canst best perform that office where thou art

XI.

Then thou, the mother of so sweet a child,
Her false imagined loss cease to lament,
And wisely learn to curb thy sorrows wild;
Think what a present thou to God hast sent,
And render him with patience what he lent;
This if thou do, he will an offspring give,
That till the world's last end shall make thy name to live

II.

ANNO ÆTATIS XIX.

[At a vacation exercise in the College, part Latin, part English. The Latin speeches ended, the English thus began.]

HAIL, native language! that by sinews weak
Didst move my first endeavouring tongue to speak,

[1] Two syllables are wanting to complete this line. It is probable that "Mercy" is the *youth* implied, and that we should read,
"Or wert thou Mercy, that," &c.
Jortin proposes "Hebe."

[2] About the time when this poem was written (*i. e.* 1625) a great plague raged in London. Milton was at this time only in his 17th year

And mad'st imperfect words with childish trips,
Half unpronounced, slide through my infant lips,
Driving dumb silence from the portal door,
Where he had mutely sat two years before:
Here I salute thee, and thy pardon ask,
That now I use thee in my latter task:
Small loss it is that thence can come unto thee,
I know my tongue but little grace can do thee:
Thou need'st not be ambitious to be first,
Believe me I have thither packed the worst;
And, if it happen as I did forecast,
The daintiest dishes shall be served up last.
I pray thee then deny me not thy aid
For this same small neglect that I have made;
But haste thee straight to do me once a pleasure,
And from thy wardrobe bring thy chiefest treasure,
Not those new-fangled toys and trimming slight
Which takes our late fantastics with delight,
But cull those richest robes and gay'st attire
Which deepest spirits and choicest wits desire:
I have some naked thoughts that rove about,
And loudly knock to have their passage out;
And, weary of their place, do only stay
Till thou hast decked them in thy best array,
That so they may, without suspect or fears,
Fly swiftly to this fair assembly's ears;
Yet I had rather, if I were to choose,
Thy service in some graver subject use,[1]
Such as may make thee search thy coffers round,
Before thou clothe my fancy in fit sound:
Such where the deep transported mind may soar
Above the wheeling poles, and at Heaven's door
Look in, and see each blissful deity
How he before the thunderous throne doth lie,
Listening to what unshorn[2] Apollo sings
To the touch of golden wires, while Hebe brings
Immortal nectar to her kingly sire;

[1] It appears, by this address of Milton's to his native language, that even in these green years he had the ambition to think of writing an epic poem; and it is worth the curious reader's attention to observe how much the Paradise Lost corresponds in its circumstances to the prophetic wish he now formed.—*Thyer.*

[2] An epithet peculiar to Apollo among the poets. Cf. Pindar, Pyth. iii. 26, Hor. Od. i. 21, 2.

Then passing through the scenes of watchful fire,
And misty regions of wide air next under,
And hills of snow and lofts of piléd thunder,
May tell at length how green-eyed Neptune raves,
In Heaven's defiance mustering all his waves;
Then sing of secret things that came to pass
When beldame Nature in her cradle was;
And last of kings and queens and heroes old,
Such as the wise Demodocus[1] once told
In solemn songs at king Alcinous' feast
While sad Ulysses' soul and all the rest
Are held with his melodious harmony
In willing chains and sweet captivity.
But fie, my wandering muse, how thou dost stray!
Expectance calls thee now another way;
Thou know'st it must be now thy only bent
To keep in compass of thy predicament:
Then quick about thy purposed business come,
That to the next I may resign my room.

[Then Ens is represented as father of the Predicaments,[2] his ten sons, whereof the eldest stood for Substance with his canons, which Ens, thus speaking, explains.]

Good luck befriend thee, son, for at thy birth
The fairy ladies danced upon the hearth;
Thy drowsy nurse hath sworn she did them spy
Come tripping to the room where thou didst lie,
And, sweetly singing round about thy bed,
Strew all their blessings on thy sleeping head.
She heard them give thee this, that thou shouldst still
From eyes of mortals walk invisible:
Yet there is something that doth force my fear,
For once it was my dismal hap to hear
A sibyl old, bow-bent with crooked age,
That far events full wisely could presage,
And in time's long and dark prospective glass
Foresaw what future days should bring to pass:
Your son, said she (nor can you it prevent),
Shall subject be to many an accident.

[1] Alluding to the eighth book of the Odyssey.

[2] Or categories. If the reader does not understand metaphysics, he will not be much the wiser for any explanation I could give him within the space of a note.

O'er all his brethren he shall reign as king,
Yet every one shall make him underling,
And those that cannot live from him asunder
Ungratefully shall strive to keep him under,
In worth and excellence he shall out-go them,
Yet, being above them, he shall be below them:
From others he shall stand in need of nothing,
Yet on his brothers shall depend for clothing.
To find a foe it shall not be his hap,
And peace shall lull him in her flowery lap;
Yet shall he live in strife, and at his door
Devouring war shall never cease to roar:
Yea it shall be his natural property
To harbour those that are at enmity.
What power, what force, what mighty spell, if not
Your learned hands, can loose this Gordian knot?

[The next, Quantity and Quality, spake in prose, then Relation was called by his name.]

Rivers, arise![1] whether thou be the son
Of utmost Tweed, or Oose, or gulfy Dun;
Or Trent, who, like some earth-born giant, spreads
His thirty arms along the indented meads;
Or sullen Mole, that runneth underneath;
Or Severn swift, guilty of maidens' death;
Or rocky Avon; or of sedgy Lee;
Or coaly Tine; or ancient hallowed Dee;
Or Humber loud, that keeps the Scythian's name,
Or Medway smooth; or royal towered Thame.

[The rest was prose.]

III.

ON THE MORNING OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY.

Composed 1629.[2]

I.

This is the month, and this the happy morn,
Wherein the Son of Heaven's eternal King,

[1] In invoking these rivers, Milton had his eye particularly upon that admirable episode in Spenser of the marriage of the Thames and the Medway, where the several rivers are introduced in honour of the ceremony.—*Newton.*

[2] When Milton was twenty-one years old.

Of wedded maid, and virgin mother born,
Our great redemption from above did bring;
For so the holy sages once did sing,
That he our deadly forfeit should release,
And with his Father work us a perpetual peace.

II.

That glorious form, that light unsufferable,
And that far-beaming blaze of majesty
Wherewith he wont at Heaven's high council-table
To sit the midst of Trinal Unity,
He laid aside; and here with us to be,
Forsook the courts of everlasting day,
And chose with us a darksome house of mortal clay.

III.

Say, heavenly muse, shall not thy sacred vein
Afford a present to the Infant God?
Hast thou no verse, no hymn, or solemn strain,
To welcome him to this his new abode,
Now while the Heaven, by the sun's team untrod,
Hath took no print of the approaching light,
And all the spangled host keep watch in squadrons bright?

IV.

See how from far upon the eastern road
The star-led wizards haste with odours sweet:
Oh, run, prevent them with thy humble ode,
And lay it lowly at his blessed feet;
Have thou the honour first thy Lord to greet,
And join thy voice unto the angel quire,
From out his secret altar touched with hallowed fire[1]

The Hymn.

I.

It was the winter wild,
While the Heaven-born child
All meanly wrapped in the rude manger lies:
Nature in awe to him
Had doffed her gaudy trim,
With her great Master so to sympathize:
It was no season then for her
To wanton with the sun, her lusty paramour.

[1] Alluding to Is. vi. 6, 7.

II.

Only with speeches fair
She woos the gentle air
To hide her guilty front with innocent snow,
And on her naked shame,
Pollute with sinful blame,
The saintly veil of maiden white to throw,
Confounded, that her Maker's eyes
Should look so near upon her foul deformities

III.

But he, her fears to cease,
Sent down the meek-eyed Peace;
She, crowned with olive green, came softly sliding
Down through the turning sphere
His ready harbinger,
With turtle wing the amorous clouds dividing,
And waving wide her myrtle wand,
She strikes an universal peace[1] through sea and land.

IV.

No war, or battle's sound,
Was heard the world around:
The idle spear and shield were high up hung;
The hooked chariot stood,
Unstained with hostile blood;
The trumpet spake not to the armed throng,
And kings sat still with awful eye,
As if they surely knew their sovran Lord was by.

V.

But peaceful was the night
Wherein the Prince of Light
His reign of peace upon the earth began:
The winds with wonder whist[2]
Smoothly the waters kissed,
Whispering new joys to the mild ocean,
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,
While birds of calm sit brooding on the charmed wave.

VI.

The stars with deep amaze
Stand fixed in stedfast gaze,
Bending one way their precious influence,
And will not take their flight,
For all the morning light,
Or Lucifer that often warned them thence:

[1] "Strikes peace," a Latinism, *fœdus ferire*. [2] Silent.

But in their glimmering orbs did glow,
Until their Lord himself bespake, and bid them go.

VII

And though the shady gloom
Had given day her room,
The sun himself withheld his wonted speed,
And hid his head for shame,
As his inferior flame
The new enlightened world no more should need;
He saw a greater sun appear
Than his bright throne, or burning axletree, could bear.

VIII.

The shepherds on the lawn,
Or e'er the point of dawn,
Sat simply chatting in a rustic row;
Full little thought they then,
That the mighty Pan
Was kindly come to live with them below;
Perhaps their loves, or else their sheep,
Was all that did their silly thoughts so busy keep.

IX.

When such music sweet
Their hearts and ears did greet,
As never was by mortal finger strook,
Divinely-warbled voice
Answering the stringèd noise,
As all their souls in blissful rapture took:
The air, such pleasure loth to lose,
With thousand echoes still prolongs each heavenly close.

X.

Nature that heard such sound,
Beneath the hollow round
Of Cynthia's seat, the airy region thrilling,[1]
Now was almost won
To think her part was done,
And that her reign had here its last fulfilling;
She knew such harmony alone
Could hold all heaven and earth in happier union.

XI.

At last surrounds their sight
A globe of circular light,
That with long beams the shame-faced night arrayed;
The helmèd cherubim,

[1] Piercing.

And sworded seraphim,
  Are seen in glittering ranks with wings displayed,
Harping in loud and solemn quire,
With unexpressive notes to Heaven's new-born Heir

XII.

Such music (as 'tis said)
Before was never made,
  But when of old the sons of morning sung,[1]
While the Creator great
His constellations set,
  And the well-balanced world on hinges hung,
And cast the dark foundations deep,
And bid the weltering waves their oozy channel keep.

XIII.

Ring out, ye crystal spheres,
Once bless our human ears
  (If ye have power to touch our senses so),
And let your silver chime
Move in melodious time,
  And let the base of Heaven's deep organ blow
And with your ninefold harmony
Make up full consort to the angelic symphony.

XIV.

For if such holy song
Enwrap our fancy long,
  Time will run back, and fetch the age of gold,
And speckled Vanity
Will sicken soon and die,
  And leprous Sin will melt from earthly mould,
And Hell itself will pass away,
And leave her dolorous mansions to the peering day.

XV.

Yea, Truth and Justice then
Will down return to men,
  Orbed in a rainbow; and like glories wearing[2]
Mercy will sit between,
Throned in celestial sheen,
  With radiant feet the tissued clouds down steering.
And Heaven, as at some festival,
Will open wide the gates of her high palace hall.

[1] Job xxxviii. 7.

[2] This is the author's own correction. He had originally written—

"The enamelled arras of the rainbow wearing;
And Mercy sit between," &c.

XVI.

But wisest Fate says no,
This must not yet be so,
The babe lies yet in smiling infancy,
That on the bitter cross
Must redeem our loss;
So both himself and us to glorify:
Yet first to those ychained in sleep,
The wakeful trump of doom must thunder through the deep,

XVII

With such a horrid clang
As on Mount Sinai rang,
While the red fire and smouldering clouds out brake:
The aged earth aghast,
With terror of that blast,
Shall from the surface to the centre shake;
When at the world's last session,
The dreadful Judge in middle air shall spread his throne

XVIII.

And then at last our bliss
Full and perfect is,
But now begins; for, from this happy day,
The old dragon, underground
In straiter limits bound,
Not half so far casts his usurpéd sway,
And wroth to see his kingdom fail,
Swinges the scaly horror of his folded tail.

XIX.

The oracles are dumb,[1]
No voice or hideous hum
Runs through the archéd roof in words deceiving.
Apollo from his shrine
Can no more divine,
With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving.
No nightly trance, or breathéd spell,
Inspires the pale-eyed priest from the prophetic cell

XX.

The lonely mountains o'er,
And the resounding shore,
A voice of weeping heard[2] and loud lament;

[1] Alluding to the belief entertained by many of the Fathers, that the oracles ceased at the coming of Christ.

[2] Alluding to an effective story told by Plutarch (*de defectu oraculorum*), that a voice had been heard, proclaiming that "The Great Pan was dead."

From haunted spring, and dale
Edged with poplar pale,
The parting genius is with sighing sent;
With flower-inwoven tresses torn
The nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets mourn.

XXI.

In consecrated earth,
And on the holy hearth,
The Lars[1] and Lemures[2] moan with midnight plaint:
In urns, and altars round,
A drear and dying sound
Affrights the Flamens at their service quaint;
And the chill marble seems to sweat,
While each peculiar power foregoes his wonted seat.

XXII.

Peor and Baälim
Forsake their temples dim,
With that twice battered god of Palestine[3],
And moonéd Ashtaroth,
Heaven's queen and mother both,
Now sits not girt with tapers' holy shine;
The Lybic Hammon shrinks his horn,
In vain the Tyrian maids their wounded Thammuz mourn.

XXIII.

And sullen Moloch fled,
Hath left in shadows dread
His burning idol all of blackest hue;
In vain with cymbals' ring
They call the grisly king,
In dismal dance about the furnace blue;
The brutish gods of Nile as fast,
Isis, and Orus, and the dog Anubis, haste.

XXIV.

Nor is Osiris seen
In Memphian grove or green,
Trampling the unshowered grass with lowings loud
Nor can he be at rest
Within his sacred chest,
Nought but profoundest hell can be his shroud;

[1] Household gods.
[2] Night spirits, ghosts.
[3] Dagon. See Judges xvi., and 1 Sam. v. The names of the heathen gods mentioned in the following lines have already been explained in the notes on the first book of Paradise Lost.

In vain with timbrelled anthems dark
The sable-stolèd sorcerers bear his worshipped ark

XXV.

He feels from Juda's land
The dreaded infant's hand,
The rays of Bethlehem blind his dusky eyn,
Nor all the gods beside,
Longer dare abide,
Not Typhon huge ending in snaky twine:
Our Babe to show his Godhead true,
Can in his swaddling bands control the damnèd crew

XXVI.

So when the sun in bed,
Curtained with cloudy red,
Pillows his chin upon an orient wave,
The flocking shadows pale
Troop to the infernal jail,
Each fettered ghost slips to his several grave,
And the yellow-skirted fays
Fly after the night-steeds, leaving their moon-loved maze

XXVII.

But see the virgin blest
Hath laid her Babe to rest,
Time is our tedious song should here have ending:
Heaven's youngest teemèd star
Hath fixed her polished car,
Her sleeping Lord with handmaid lamp attending:
And all about the courtly stable
Bright-harnessed[1] angels sit in order serviceable,

IV.

THE PASSION.[2]

I.

Erewhile of music, and ethereal mirth,
Wherewith the stage of air and earth did ring,
And joyous news of heavenly Infant's birth,
My muse with angels did divide to sing;
But headlong joy is ever on the wing,

[1] Equipped.

[2] It appears from the beginning of this poem, that it was composed after, and probably soon after, the ode on the Nativity.

In winter solstice like the shortened light
Soon swallowed up in dark and long out-living night

II.

For now to sorrow must I tune my song,
And set my harp to notes of saddest woe,
Which on our dearest Lord did seize ere long,
Dangers, and snares, and wrongs, and worse than so,
Which he for us did freely undergo:
Most perfect Hero, tried in heaviest plight
Of labours huge and hard, too hard for human wight!

III.

He, sovran Priest, stooping his regal head,
That dropped with odorous oil down his fair eyes,
Poor fleshly tabernacle entered,
His starry front low-roofed beneath the skies:
Oh, what a mask was there, what a disguise!
Yet more; the stroke of death he must abide,
Then lies him meekly down fast by his brethren's side

IV.

These latest scenes confine my roving verse,
To this horizon is my Phœbus bound;
His godlike acts, and his temptations fierce,
And former sufferings other where are found;
Loud o'er the rest Cremona's trump[1] doth sound;
Me softer airs befit, and softer strings
Of lute, or viol still, more apt for mournful things.

V.

Befriend me night, best patroness of grief,
Over the pole thy thickest mantle throw,
And work my flattered fancy to belief,
That Heaven and Earth are coloured with my woe;
My sorrows are too dark for day to know:
The leaves should all be black whereon I write,
And letters, where my tears have washed, a wannish white.

VI.

See, see the chariot, and those rushing wheels,
That whirled the prophet up at Chebar[2] flood,
My spirit some transporting cherub feels,
To bear me where the towers of Salem stood,
Once glorious towers, now sunk in guiltless blood;

[1] *i. e.* the poetry of Hieronymus Vida, of Cremona, who wrote a "Christiad."

[2] As Ezekiel saw the vision of the four wheels and of the glory of God at the river Chebar.

There doth my soul in holy vision sit
In pensive trance, and anguish, and ecstatic fit

VII.

Mine eye hath found that sad sepulchral rock
That was the casket of Heaven's richest store,
And here though grief my feeble hands up lock,
Yet on the softened quarry would I score
My plaining verse as lively as before;
For sure so well instructed are my tears,
That they would fitly fall in ordered characters.

VIII.

Or should I thence, hurried on viewless wing,
Take up a weeping on the mountains wild,
The gentle neighbourhood of grove and spring
Would soon unbosom all their echoes mild,
And I (for grief is easily beguiled)
Might think the infection of my sorrows loud
Had got a race of mourners on some pregnant cloud

[This subject the author finding to be above the years he had, when he wrote it, and nothing satisfied with what was begun, left it unfinished.]

V.

ON TIME.[1]

Fly, envious Time, till thou run out thy race;
Call on the lazy leaden-stepping hours,
Whose speed is but the heavy plummet's pace;
And glut thyself with what thy womb devours,
Which is no more than what is false and vain,
And merely mortal dross;
So little is our loss,
So little is thy gain.
For when as each thing bad thou hast entombed,
And last of all thy greedy self consumed,
Then long eternity shall greet our bliss
With an individual kiss;
And joy shall overtake us as a flood,
When every thing that is sincerely good

[1] To this copy of verses the poet had appended the direction, "To be set on a clock-case."

And perfectly divine,
With truth, and peace, and love, shall ever shine
About the supreme throne
Of him, to whose happy-making sight[1] alone
When once our heavenly-guided soul shall climb,
Then all this earthy grossness quit,
Attired with stars, we shall for ever sit,
Triumphing over Death, and Chance, and thee, O Time

VI.

UPON THE CIRCUMCISION.

Ye flaming powers, and wingéd warriors bright,
That erst with music, and triumphant song,
First heard by happy watchful shepherds' ear,
So sweetly sung your joy the clouds along
Through the soft silence of the listening night,
Now mourn; and if sad share with us to bear
Your fiery essence can distil no tear,
Burn in your sighs, and borrow
Seas wept from our deep sorrow:
He who with all Heaven's heraldry whilere
Entered the world, now bleeds to give us ease;
Alas! how soon our sin
Sore doth begin
His infancy to seize!

O more exceeding love, or law more just?
Just law, indeed, but more exceeding love!
For we by rightful doom remediless
Were lost in death, till he that dwelt above,
High throned in secret bliss, for us frail dust
Emptied his glory,[2] even to nakedness;
And that great covenant which we still transgress
Entirely satisfied,
And the full wrath beside
Of vengeful justice bore for our excess,

[1] The same precisely as "beatific vision."

[2] From the Greek of Phillip. ii. 7: ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσε, "he made himself of no reputation."

And seals obedience first with wounding smart
This day; but oh, ere long,
Huge pangs and strong
Will pierce more near his heart.

VII.

AT A SOLEMN MUSIC.

Blest pair of Sirens, pledges of Heaven's joy,
Sphere-born harmonious sisters, Voice and Verse,
Wed your divine sounds, and mixed power employ,
Dead things with inbreathed sense able to pierce,
And to our high-raised fantasy present
That undisturbéd song of pure concent,[1]
Aye sung before the sapphire-coloured throne
To him that sits thereon,
With saintly shout, and solemn jubilee,
Where the bright seraphim in burning row
Their loud uplifted angel-trumpets blow,
And the cherubic host in thousand quires
Touch their immortal harps of golden wires,
With those just spirits that wear victorious palms,
Hymns devout and holy psalms
Singing everlastingly;
That we on earth with undiscording voice
May rightly answer that melodious noise;
As once we did, till disproportioned sin
Jarred against nature's chime, and with harsh din
Broke the fair music that all creatures made
To their great Lord, whose love their motion swayed
In perfect diapason,[2] whilst they stood
In first obedience, and their state of good.
Oh, may we soon again renew that song,
And keep in tune with Heaven, till God ere long
To his celestial consort us unite,
To live with him, and sing in endless morn of light.

[1] This is preferable to the other reading, "content."
[2] Compare Plin. Nat. Hst. ii. 20.

VIII.

AN EPITAPH ON THE MARCHIONESS OF WINCHESTER.[1]

This rich marble doth inter
The honoured wife of Winchester,
A viscount's daughter, an earl's heir,
Besides what her virtues fair
Added to her noble birth,
More than she could own from earth.
Summers three times eight, save one,
She had told; alas! too soon,
After so short time of breath,
To house with darkness, and with death.
Yet had the number of her days
Been as complete as was her praise,
Nature and fate had had no strife
In giving limit to her life.
Her high birth, and her graces sweet,
Quickly found a lover meet;
The virgin quire for her request
The god that sits at marriage feast;
He at their invoking came,
But with a scarce well-lighted flame,
And in his garland as he stood
Ye might discern a cypress bud.[2]
Once had the early matrons run
To greet her of a lovely son,
And now with second hope she goes,
And calls Lucina to her throes;
But whether by mischance or blame
Atropos for Lucina[3] came,
And with remorseless cruelty
Spoiled at once both fruit and tree:
The hapless babe before his birth
Had burial, yet not laid in earth,
And the languished mother's womb
Was not long a living tomb.

[1] Jane, daughter of Thomas Lord Viscount Savage, of Rocksavage, Chester. She died in childbed of a second son, in the twenty-third year of her age.

[2] Symbolical of a funeral.

[3] i. e. the Fates instead of the goddess who presides over child-birth.

So have I seen some tender slip,
Saved with care from winter's nip,
The pride of her carnation train,
Plucked up by some unheedy swain
Who only thought to crop the flower
New shot up from vernal shower;
But the fair blossom hangs the head
Side-ways, as on a dying bed,
And those pearls of dew she wears,
Prove to be presaging tears,
Which the sad morn had let fall
On her hastening funeral.
Gentle lady, may thy grave
Peace and quiet ever have·
After this, thy travel sore,
Sweet rest seize thee evermore,
That to give the world increase,
Shortened hast thy own life's lease.
Here, besides the sorrowing
That thy noble house doth bring,
Here be tears of perfect moan
Wept for thee in Helicon,
And some flowers, and some bays,
For thy hearse, to strew the ways,
Sent thee from the banks of Came,
Devoted to thy virtuous name;
Whilst thou, bright saint, high sitt'st in glory,
Next her much like to thee in story,
That fair Syrian shepherdess,[1]
Who, after years of barrenness,
The highly favoured Joseph bore
To him that served for her before,
And at her next birth, much like thee,
Through pangs fled to felicity,
Far within the bosom bright
Of blazing Majesty and Light:
There with thee, new welcome saint,
Like fortunes may her soul acquaint,
With thee there clad in radiant sheen,
No marchioness, but now a queen.

[1] Rachel. See Gen. xxxv. 18.

IX

SONG ON MAY MORNING.

Now the bright morning star, day's harbinger,
Comes dancing from the east, and leads with her
The flowery May, who from her green lap throws[1]
The yellow cowslip, and the pale primrose
Hail, bounteous May, that dost inspire
Mirth and youth and warm desire;
Woods and groves are of thy dressing,
Hill and dale doth boast thy blessing.
Thus we salute thee with our early song,
And welcome thee, and wish thee long.

X.

ON SHAKSPEARE, 1630.[2]

What needs my Shakspeare for his honoured bones
The labour of an age in piléd stones?
Or that his hallowed reliques should be hid
Under a star-ypointing pyramid?
Dear son of memory, great heir of fame,
What need'st thou such weak witness of thy name?
Thou in our wonder and astonishment
Hast built thyself a livelong monument.
For whilst to the shame of slow-endeavouring art
Thy easy numbers flow, and that each heart
Hath from the leaves of thy unvalued book
Those Delphic lines with deep impression took;
Then thou our fancy of itself bereaving,
Dost make us marble with too much conceiving;
And so sepulchred in such pomp dost lie,
That kings, for such a tomb, would wish to die.

[1] Shakspeare, Richard II. act v. sc. 4—

"Who are the violets now
That strow the green lap of the new-come spring."

[2] In the twenty-second year of the poet's age.

XI.

ON THE UNIVERSITY CARRIER,

WHO SICKENED IN THE TIME OF HIS VACANCY, BEING FORBID TO GO TO LONDON, BY REASON OF THE PLAGUE.

HERE lies old Hobson;[1] Death hath broke his girt
And here, alas! hath laid him in the dirt;
Or else the ways being foul, twenty to one,
He's here stuck in a slough, and overthrown.
'Twas such a shifter, that if truth were known,
Death was half glad when he had got him down;
For he had, any time this ten years full,
Dodged with him betwixt Cambridge and the Bull
And surely Death could never have prevailed,
Had not his weekly course of carriage failed;
But lately finding him so long at home,
And thinking now his journey's end was come,
And that he had ta'en up his latest inn,
In the kind office of a chamberlin
Showed him his room where he must lodge that night,
Pulled off his boots, and took away the light:
If any ask for him, it shall be said,
Hobson has supped, and 's newly gone to bed.

XII.

ANOTHER ON THE SAME.

HERE lieth one, who did most truly prove
That he could never die while he could move;
So hung his destiny, never to rot
While he might still jog on and keep his trot;

[1] Mr. Thomas Hobson was a carrier, and the first man in this island who let out hackney horses. He lived in Cambridge, and, observing that the scholars rid hard, his manner was to keep a large stable of horses, with boots, bridles, and whips, to furnish the gentlemen at once, without going from college to college to borrow, as they have done since the death of this worthy man. I say, Mr. Hobson kept a stable of forty good cattle, always ready and fit for travel

Made of sphere-metal, never to decay
Until his revolution was at stay.
Time numbers motion, yet (without a crime
Gainst old truth) motion numbered out his time:
And like an engine moved with wheel and weight,
His principles being ceased, he ended straight.
Rest that gives all men life, gave him his death,
And too much breathing put him out of breath;
Nor were it contradiction to affirm
Too long vacation hastened on his term.
Merely to drive the time away he sickened,
Fainted, and died, nor would with ale be quickened,
"Nay," quoth he, on his swooning bed out-stretched;
"If I mayn't carry, sure I'll ne'er be fetched,
But vow, though the cross doctors all stood hearers,
For one carrier put down to make six bearers."
Ease was his chief disease, and to judge right,
He died for heaviness that his cart went light:
His leisure told him that his time was come,
And lack of load made his life burdensome,
That even to his last breath (there be that say't)
As he were pressed to death, he cried "More weight;"
But had his doings lasted as they were,
He had been an immortal carrier.
Obedient to the moon he spent his date
In course reciprocal, and had his fate
Linked to the mutual flowing of the seas,
Yet (strange to think) his wain was his increase:
His letters are delivered all and gone,
Only remains this superscription.

ling; but when a man came for a horse, he was led into the stable, where there was great choice, but he obliged him to take the horse which stood next to the stable-door; so that every customer was alike well served, according to his chance, and every horse ridden with the same justice; from whence it became a proverb, when what ought to be your choice was forced upon you, to say "Hobson's choice." This memorable man stands drawn in fresco at an inn (which he used) in Bishopsgate-street, with an hundred pound bag under his arm, with this inscription upon the said bag, "The fruitful mother of a hundred more."—*Spectator*, No. 509.

XIII.

L'ALLEGRO.[1]

HENCE loathéd Melancholy,
Of Cerberus[2] and blackest Midnight born,
In Stygian cave forlorn,
'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights unholy,
Find out some uncouth cell,
Where brooding darkness spreads his jealous wings,
And the night raven sings;
There under ebon shades, and low-browed rocks,
As ragged as thy locks,
In dark Cimmerian[3] desert ever dwell.
But come thou goddess fair and free,
In Heaven ycleped Euphrosyne,
And by men, heart-easing Mirth,
Whom lovely Venus at a birth[4]
With two sister graces more
To ivy-crownéd Bacchus bore
Or whether (as some sages sing)[5]
The frolic wind that breathes the spring,
Zephyr with Aurora playing,

[1] This and the following poem are exquisitely beautiful in themselves, but appear much more beautiful when they are considered as they were written, in contrast with each other. There is a great variety of pleasing images in each of them; and it is remarkable that the poet represents several of the same objects as exciting both mirth and melancholy, and affecting us differently according to the different dispositions and affections of the soul. This is nature and experience. He derives the title of both poems from the Italian, which language was then principally in vogue. L'Allegro is the cheerful, merry man; and, in this poem, he describes the course of mirth, in the country and in the city, from morning till noon, and from noon till night: and possibly he might have this in his thoughts, when he said afterwards in his "Areopagitica," "There be delights, there be recreations and jolly pastimes that will fetch the day about from sun to sun, and rock the tedious year as in a delightful dream." Vol. i. p. 154.—*Newton.*

[2] Erebus, the conjecture of Upton and Newton, is more agreeable to mythology.

[3] The Cimmerians lived in caves, and never saw the light of the sun. See Homer, Od. xi. 14; Tibull. iv. i. 65.

[4] The more ancient opinion makes the graces spring from Jupiter and Eurynome.

[5] This is merely Milton's fiction, as no such account is given elsewhere.

As he met her once a maying,
There on beds of violets blue,
And fresh-blown roses washed in dew,
Filled her with thee a daughter fair,
So buxom, blithe, and debonair.
Haste thee, nymph, and bring with thee
Jest and youthful jollity,
Quips, and cranks, and wanton wiles,
Nods, and becks, and wreathéd smiles,
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek;
Sport that wrinkled care derides,
And laughter holding both his sides.
Come, and trip it as you go
On the light fantastic toe,
And in thy right hand lead with thee,
The mountain nymph,[1] sweet Liberty;
And if I give thee honour due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew,
To live with her, and live with thee,
In unreprovéd pleasures free;
To hear the lark begin his flight,
And singing startle the dull night,
From his watch-tower in the skies,
Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
Then to come in spite of sorrow,
And at my window bid good-morrow,
Through the sweet-briar, or the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine:
While the cock with lively din
Scatters the rear of darkness thin,
And to the stack, or the barn-door,
Stoutly struts his dames before:
Oft listening how the hounds and horn
Cheerly rouse the slumbering morn,
From the side of some hoar hill,
Through the high wood echoing shrill:
Some time walking not unseen
By hedge-row elms, on hillocks green,
Right against the eastern gate,
Where the great sun begins his state,

[1] So called, probably because those nations which dwell on mountains have preserved their liberty longest and most perseveringly.

Robed in flames and amber light,
The clouds in thousand liveries dight,[1]
While the ploughman near at hand
Whistles o'er the furrowed land,
And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
And the mower whets his scythe,
And every shepherd tells his tale
Under the hawthorn in the dale.
Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures
Whilst the landskip round it measures,
Russet lawns, and fallows gray,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray,[2]
Mountains on whose barren breast
The labouring clouds do often rest,
Meadows trim with daisies pied,
Shallow brooks, and rivers wide
Towers and battlements it sees
Bosomed high in tufted trees,
Where perhaps some beauty lies,
The Cynosure[3] of neighbouring eyes.
Hard by, a cottage chimney smokes,
From betwixt two aged oaks,
Where Corydon and Thyrsis met,
Are at their savoury dinner set
Of herbs, and other country messes,
Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses;
And then in haste her bower she leaves,
With Thestylis to bind the sheaves;
Or if the earlier season lead
To the tanned haycock in the mead.
Sometimes with secure delight
The upland hamlets will invite,
When the merry bells ring round,
And the jocund rebecks[4] sound
To many a youth, and many a maid,
Dancing in the chequered shade;
And young and old come forth to play
On a sunshine holy-day,
Till the livelong daylight fail;
Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,

[1] Dressed, adorned.
[2] Feed at large.
[3] The constellation of Ursa Minor, or the Little Bear.
[4] A three-stringed fiddle.

With stories[1] told of many a feat,
How fairy Mab the junkets eat,
She was pinched, and pulled, she said,
And he by friars' lanthorn led,
Tells how the drudging goblin sweat,
To earn his cream bowl duly set,[2]
When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy flail hath threshed the corn,
That ten day-labourers could not end;
Then lies him down the lubbar fiend,
And stretched out all the chimney's length,
Basks at the fire his hairy strength,
And crop-full out of doors he flings,
Ere the first cock his matin rings.
Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,
By whispering winds soon lulled asleep
Towered cities please us then,
And the busy hum of men,
Where throngs of knights and barons bold
In weeds of peace high triumphs hold,
With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
Rain influence, and judge the prize
Of wit, or arms, while both contend
To win her grace, whom all commend.
There let Hymen oft appear
In saffron robe, with taper clear,
And pomp, and feast, and revelry,
With mask, and antique pageantry;
Such sights as youthful poets dream
On summer eves by haunted stream.
Then to the well-trod stage anon,
If Jonson's learnéd sock be on,
Or sweetest Shakspeare, fancy's child,
Warble his native wood-notes wild.

[1] These stories, it is almost unnecessary to say, formed a favourite amusement of the country people. Shakspeare has introduced several such folk-lore legends into his "Midsummer Night's Dream."

[2] Reginald Scott gives a brief account of this imaginary spirit much in the same manner with this of our author. "Your grand-dames, maids, were wont to set a *bowl of milk* for him, for his pains in grinding of malt or mustard, and sweeping the house at midnight—his *white bread and milk* was his standing fee." Discovery of Witchcraft; London: 4to. p. 66, *Peck*. See Keightley's Fairy Mythology, Art. Kobold.

And ever against eating cares,
Lap me in soft Lydian[1] airs,
Married to immortal verse,
Such as the meeting soul may pierce
In notes, with many a winding bout
Of linkéd sweetness long drawn out,
With wanton heed, and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running,
Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony;
That Orpheus' self may heave his head
From golden slumber on a bed
Of heaped Elysian flowers, and hear
Such strains as would have won the ear
Of Pluto, to have quite set free
His half regained Eurydice.
These delights, if thou canst give,
Mirth, with thee I mean to live.[2]

XIV.

IL PENSEROSO.[3]

Hence, vain deluding joys,
The brood of folly without father bred!
How little you bested,
Or fill the fixéd mind with all your toys!
Dwell in some idle brain,
And fancies fond with gaudily shapes possess,
As thick and numberless
As the gay motes that people the sunbeams,[4]

[1] The Lydian measure was very soft and sweet. So Dryden, Ode on St. Cecilia's Day:—

"Softly sweet, in Lydian measures,
Soon he soothed his soul to pleasures."

[2] A charming adaptation from Shakspeare's "Nymph's Reply to the passionate Shepherd":—

"If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me, and be my love."

[3] See note at the beginning of the last poem. The model of a great portion of this poem is a song in praise of melancholy, in Fletcher's Comedy of "The Nice Valour, or Passionate Madman."

[4] Chaucer's Wife of Bath's Tale, ver. 868.

Or likest hovering dreams,
The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train.
But hail thou goddess, sage and holy,
Hail, divinest Melancholy,
Whose saintly visage is too bright
To hit the sense of human sight,
And therefore to our weaker view,
O'erlaid with black, staid wisdom's hue;
Black, but such as in esteem
Prince Memnon's[1] sister might beseem,
Or that starred Ethiop queen[2] that strove
To set her beauty's praise above
The sea-nymphs, and their powers offended:
Yet thou art higher far descended;
Thee, bright-haired Vesta long of yore
To solitary Saturn[3] bore;
His daughter she (in Saturn's reign,
Such mixture was not held a stain).
Oft in glimmering bowers and glades
He met her, and in secret shades
Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
While yet there was no fear of Jove.
Come, pensive nun, devout and pure,
Sober, stedfast, and demure,
All in a robe of darkest grain,
Flowing with majestic train,
And sable stole of Cyprus lawn,
Over thy decent shoulders drawn.
Come, but keep thy wonted state,
With even step, and musing gait,
And looks commercing with the skies,
Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes:
There, held in holy passion still,
Forget thyself to marble, till

[1] Son of Tithonus, by Aurora, and king of Ethiopia. He was slain by Achilles when coming to the assistance of Priam, at the siege of Troy.

[2] Cassiopeia, wife of Cepheus, who, having dared to compare herself with the Nereids for beauty, was by them exposed to be devoured by a monster. Perseus, however, slew the creature, and obtained a place for Cassiopeia among the constellations.

[3] The planet Saturn was supposed to exert much influence over persons of a gloomy and thoughtful temperament.

With a sad leaden[1] downward cast
Thou fix them on the earth as fast:
And join with thee calm Peace, and Quiet,
Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet,
And hear the Muses in a ring
Aye round about Jove's altar sing;
And add to these retirèd Leisure,
That in trim gardens takes his pleasure;
But first, and chiefest, with thee bring
Him that yon soars on golden wing,
Guiding the fiery-wheelèd throne,
The cherub Contemplation;
And the mute Silence hist along,
'Less Philomel will deign a song,
In her sweetest, saddest plight,
Smoothing the rugged brow of night,
While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke,
Gently o'er the accustomed oak;
Sweet bird that shunn'st the noise of folly
Most musical, most melancholy!
Thee, chantress, oft the woods among
I woo to hear thy even-song;
And missing thee, I walk unseen
On the dry smooth-shaven green,
To behold the wandering moon,
Riding near her highest noon,
Like one that had been led astray
Through the Heaven's wide pathless way,
And oft, as if her head she bowed,
Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
Oft on a plat of rising ground,
I hear the far-off curfew sound,
Over some wide-watered shore,
Swinging slow with sullen roar;
Or if the air will not permit,
Some still removèd place will fit,
Where glowing embers through the room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom;
Far from all resort of mirth,
Save the cricket on the hearth,
Or the bellman's drowsy charm,
To bless the doors from nightly harm:

[1] So "leaden contemplation," in Shakspeare's Love's Labour Lost.

Or let my lamp at midnight hour,
Be seen in some high lonely tower,
Where I may oft outwatch the Bear,[1]
With thrice great Hermes,[2] or unsphere
The spirit of Plato to unfold
What worlds, or what vast regions hold
The immortal mind that hath forsook
Her mansion in this fleshly nook:
And of those demons that are found
In fire, air, flood, or under ground,[3]
Whose power hath a true consent
With planet or with element.
Sometime let gorgeous tragedy
In sceptred pall[4] come sweeping by,
Presenting[5] Thebes, or Pelops' line,
Or the tale of Troy divine;
Or what (though rare) of later age
Ennobled hath the buskined stage.
But oh, sad virgin, that thy power
Might raise Musæus from his bower!
Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing
Such notes as warbled to the string
Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
And made Hell grant what love did seek.
Or call up him that left half told
The story of Cambuscan[6] bold,
Of Camball, and of Algarsife,
And who had Canace to wife,
That owned the virtuous ring and glass,
And of the wondrous horse of brass,
On which the Tartar king did ride;
And if aught else great bards beside
In sage and solemn tunes have sung,
Of turneys and of trophies hung,
Of forests and enchantments drear,
Where more is meant than meets the ear.

[1] A constellation which never sets. Virg. Georg. i. 246.

[2] *i. e.* Mercurius Trismegistus.

[3] Plato believed that every part of this universe was peopled with spirits, exercising medial functions between gods and men.

[4] The long robe worn by distinguished persons in tragedy. Cf. Hor. Art. poet. 278.

[5] *i.e.* representing. The subjects here enumerated were favourite topics with the Greek tragedians.

[6] See Chaucer's Squire's Tale, and Spenser's Faërie Queen, iv. 232.

Thus night oft see me in thy pale career,
Till civil-suited morn[1] appear,
Not trickt and frounct[2] as she was wont
With the Attic[3] boy to hunt,
But kerchiefed in a comely cloud,
While rocking winds are piping loud,
Or ushered with a shower still,
When the gust hath blown his fill,
Ending on the rustling leaves.
With minute drops from off the eaves.
And when the sun begins to fling
His flaring beams, me, goddess, bring
To archéd walks of twilight groves,
And shadows brown, that Sylvan loves,
Of pine, or monumental oak,
Where the rude axe with heavéd stroke
Was never heard the nymphs to daunt,
Or fright them from their hallowed haunt.
There in close covert by some brook,
Where no profaner eye may look,
Hide me from day's garish[4] eye,
While the bee with honeyed thigh,
That at her flowery work doth sing,
And the waters murmuring,
With such consort as they keep,
Entice the dewy-feathered sleep;
And let some strange mysterious dream
Wave at his wings in airy stream
Of lively portraiture displayed,
Softly on my eyelids laid.
And as I wake, sweet music breathe
Above, about, or underneath,
Sent by some spirit to mortals good,
Or the unseen genius of the wood.
But let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious cloister's pale,

[1] Cf. Romeo and Juliet, iii. 4:—

"Come *civil* night,
Thou *sober-suited* matron, all in black."

[2] Frizzled, crisped, curled.

[3] Cephalus, with whom Aurora fell in love while he was hunting. Ovid. Met. vii. 701.

[4] Bright, gaudy.

And love the high embowéd roof,
With antic[1] pillars massy proof,
And storied windows richly dight,
Casting a dim religious light.
There let the pealing organ blow,[2]
To the full-voiced quire below,
In service high, and anthems clear,
As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
Dissolve me into ecstasies,
And bring all Heaven before mine eyes.
And may at last my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage,
The hairy gown and mossy cell,
Where I may sit and rightly spell
Of every star that Heaven doth shew,
And every herb that sips the dew;
Till old experience do attain
To something like prophetic strain.
These pleasures, Melancholy, give,
And I with thee will choose to live.

XV.

ARCADES.

[Part of an entertainment presented to the Countess Dowager of Derby, at Harefield,[3] by some noble persons of her family, who appear on the scene in pastoral habit, moving toward the seat of state, with this song.]

Song I.

Look, nymphs, and shepherds look,
What sudden blaze of majesty
Is that which we from hence descry,
Too divine to be mistook:

[1] Ancient.

[2] This shows that Milton, however mistaken in other respects, did not run into the enthusiastic madness of that fanatic age against church music.—*Thyer.*

[3] Alice, daughter of Sir John Spenser, of Althorp, in Northamptonshire. This poem was probably written during Milton's residence in the neighbourhood of Uxbridge. See *Newton.*

This, this is she
To whom our views and wishes bend;
Here our solemn search hath end.

Fame, that her high worth to raise,
Seemed erst so lavish and profuse,
We may justly now accuse
Of detraction from her praise;
Less than half we find expressed,
Envy bid conceal the rest.

Mark what radiant state she spreads,
In circle round her shining throne,
Shooting her beams like silver threads;
This, this is she alone,
Sitting like a goddess bright,
In the centre of her light.

Might she the wise Latona be,
Or the towered Cybele,
Mother of a hundred gods?
Juno dares not give her odds;
Who had thought this clime had held
A deity so unparalleled?

[As they come forward, the GENIUS of the wood appears, and turning towards them, speaks.]

GENIUS.

Stay, gentle swains, for though in this disguise,
I see bright honour sparkle through your eyes;
Of famous Arcady ye are, and sprung
Of that renowned flood, so often sung,
Divine Alpheus,[1] who by secret sluice
Stole under seas to meet his Arethuse;
And ye, the breathing roses of the wood,
Fair silver-buskined nymphs as great and good,
I know this quest of yours, and free intent,

[1] A famous river of Arcadia that, sinking under ground, passes through the sea without mixing his stream with the salt waters, and rises at last with the fountain Arethuse, near Syracuse, in Sicily.—*Newton.*

Was all in honour and devotion meant
To the great mistress of yon princely shrine,
Whom with low reverence I adore as mine,
And with all helpful service will comply
To further this night's glad solemnity;
And lead ye where ye may more near behold
What shallow-searching fame hath left untold;
Which I full oft amidst these shades alone
Have sat to wonder at, and gaze upon:
For know by lot from Jove I am the power
Of this fair wood, and live in oaken bower,
To nurse the saplings tall, and curl the grove
With ringlets quaint, and wanton windings wove.
And all my plants I save from nightly ill
Of noisome winds, and blasting vapours chill:
And from the boughs brush off the evil dew,
And heal the harms of thwarting thunder blue,
Or what the cross dire-looking planet smites,
Or hurtful worm with cankered venom bites.
When evening gray doth rise, I fetch my round
Over the mount, and all this hallowed ground,
And early, ere the odorous breath of morn
Awakes the slumbering leaves, or tasselled horn[1]
Shakes the high thicket, haste I all about,
Number my ranks, and visit every sprout
With puissant words, and murmurs made to bless;
But else in deep of night, when drowsiness
Hath locked up mortal sense, then listen I
To the celestial sirens' harmony,
That sit upon the nine enfolded spheres,[2]
And sing to those that hold the vital shears,
And turn the adamantine spindle round,
On which the fate of gods and men is wound
Such sweet compulsion doth in music lie,
To lull the daughters of Necessity,
And keep unsteady Nature to her law,
And the low world in measured motion draw

[1] Spenser, F. Q. i. 8, 8:—

"An *horn* of bugle small,
Which hung adown his side in twisted gold,
And *tassels* gay." *Newton.*

[2] See Cicero's Somnium Scipionis, § 4.

After the heavenly tune,[1] which none can hear
Of human mould with gross unpurgéd ear;
And yet such music worthiest were to blaze
The peerless highth of her immortal praise,
Whose lustre leads us, and for her most fit,
If my inferior hand or voice could hit
Inimitable sounds; yet as we go,
Whate'er the skill of lesser gods can show,
I will assay, her worth to celebrate,
And so attend ye toward her glittering state;
Where ye may all, that are of noble stem,
Approach, and kiss her sacred vesture's hem.

SONG II.

O'er the smooth enamelled green,
Where no print of step hath been,
Follow me, as I sing,
And touch the warbled string,
Under the shady roof
Of branching elm star-proof.
Follow me,
I will bring you where she sits,
Clad in splendour as befits
Her deity.
Such a rural queen
All Arcadia hath not seen.

SONG III.

Nymphs and shepherds dance no more
By sandy Ladon's[2] lilied banks,
On old Lycæus or Cyllene hoar
Trip no more in twilight ranks,
Though Erymanth your loss deplore,
A better soil shall give ye thanks.

[1] *Cf.* Merchant of Venice, v. 1:—

"There's not the smallest orb, which thou behold'st,
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubims;
Such harmony is in immortal sounds!
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close us in, we cannot hear it." *Newton.*

[2] The most beautiful river of Arcadia.

From the stony Mænalus
Bring your flocks, and live with us;
Here ye shall have greater grace,
To serve the lady of this place;
Though Syrinx your Pan's mistress were,
Yet Syrinx well might wait on her.
Such a rural queen
All Arcadia hath not seen.

XVI.

Comus.

A MASK, PRESENTED AT LUDLOW CASTLE, 1634, BEFORE THE EARL OF BRIDGEWATER, THEN PRESIDENT OF WALES.

The Mask was presented in 1634, and consequently in the twenty-sixth year of our author's age. In the title-page of the first edition, printed in 1637, it is said that it was presented on Michaelmas night, and there was this motto:—

> "Eheu quid volui misero mihi! floribus austrum
> Perditus."

In this edition, and in that of Milton's poems in 1645, there was prefixed to the Mask the following dedication:—

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD JOHN VISCOUNT BRACKLY, SON AND HEIR APPARENT TO THE EARL OF BRIDGEWATER, &c.

MY LORD,—This poem, which received its first occasion of birth from yourself and others of your noble family, and much honour from your own person in the performance, now returns again to make a final dedication of itself to you. Although not openly acknowledged by the author, yet it is a legitimate offspring, so lovely, and so much desired, that the often copying of it hath tired my pen to give my several friends satisfaction, and brought me to a necessity of producing it to the public view; and now to offer it up in all rightful devotion to those fair hopes, and

rare endowments of your much promising youth, which give a full assurance, to all that know you, of a future excellence. Live, sweet lord, to be the honour of your name, and receive this as your own, from the hands of him, who hath by many favours been long obliged to your most honoured parents, and as in this representation your attendant Thyrsis, so now in all real expression

Your faithful and most
humble servant,
H. Lawes.

[In the edition of 1645 was also prefixed Sir Henry Wotton's letter to the author upon the following poem.]

THE PERSONS.

The Attendant Spirit, *afterwards in the habit of* Thyrsis.
Comus, *with his crew.*
The Lady.
First Brother.
Second Brother.
Sabrina, *the Nymph.*

The Chief Persons who presented were—

The Lord Brackly.
Mr. Thomas Egerton, *his Brother.*
The Lady Alice Egerton

[The first scene discovers a wild wood. The Attendant Spirit descends or enters.]

ATTENDANT SPIRIT.

Before the starry threshold of Jove's court
My mansion is, where those immortal shapes
Of bright aërial spirits live insphered
In regions mild of calm and serene air,
Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot,
Which men call Earth; and with low-thoughted care
Confined, and pestered in this pinfold here,

Strive to keep up a frail and feverish being,
Unmindful[1] of the crown that virtue gives,
After this mortal change to her true servants,
Amongst the enthroned gods on sainted seats.
Yet some there be, that by due steps aspire
To lay their just hands on that golden key,[2]
That opes the palace of eternity:
To such my errand is; and but for such,
I would not soil these pure ambroisal weeds
With the rank vapours of this sin-worn mould.
But to my task. Neptune, besides the sway
Of every salt flood, and each ebbing stream,
Took in by lot 'twixt high and nether Jove
Imperial rule of all the sea-girt isles,
That, like to rich and various gems,[3] inlay
The unadornéd bosom of the deep:
Which he, to grace his tributary gods,
By course commits to several government,
And gives them leave to wear their sapphire crowns,
And wield their little tridents; but this isle,
The greatest and the best of all the main,
He quarters to his blue-haired deities;
And all this tract that fronts the falling sun
A noble peer of mickle trust and power
Has in his charge, with tempered awe to guide
An old and haughty nation, proud in arms:
Where his fair offspring nursed in princely lore,
Are coming to attend their father's state,
And new-entrusted sceptre; but their way
Lies through the perplexed paths of this drear wood,
The nodding horror of whose shady brows
Threats the forlorn and wandering passenger;
And here their tender age might suffer peril,
But that by quick command from sovran Jove

[1] The stress is upon this fact; for, though it may not be a fault in itself to

"Strive to keep up a frail and feverish being,"

yet it certainly is to strive to keep it up "unmindful," &c.—*Newton.*

[2] Of St. Peter. Cf. Lycidas, ver. 110.

[3] Cf. Richard II. act. ii. sc. 1, where John of Gaunt speaks of England as—

"this little world,
This precious stone set in the silver sea."

I was despatched for their defence and guard:
And listen why; for I will tell you now
What never yet was heard in tale or song,
From old or modern bard, in hall or bower.
Bacchus, that first from out the purple grape
Crushed the sweet poison of misused wine,
After the Tuscan mariners transformed,
Coasting the Tyrrhene shore, as the winds listed,
On Circe's island fell (who knows not Circe,
The daughter of the sun, whose charméd cup
Whoever tasted lost his upright shape,
And downward fell into a grovelling swine?):
This nymph, that gazed upon his clustering locks
With ivy berries wreathed, and his blithe youth,
Had by him, ere he parted thence, a son
Much like his father, but his mother more,
Whom therefore she brought up, and Comus named,
Who, ripe and frolic of his full-grown age,
Roving the Celtic and Iberian fields,[1]
At last betakes him to this ominous wood;
And, in thick shelter of black shades embowered,
Excels his mother at her mighty art,
Offering to every weary traveller
His orient liquor in a crystal glass,
To quench the drouth of Phœbus; which, as they taste
(For most do taste through fond intemperate thirst),
Soon as the potion works, their human countenance,
The express resemblance of the gods, is changed
Into some brutish form of wolf, or bear,
Or ounce, or tiger, hog, or bearded goat,
All other parts remaining as they were,
And they, so perfect is their misery,
Not once perceive their foul disfigurement,
But boast themselves more comely than before;
And all their friends and native home forget,
To roll with pleasure in a sensual sty.
Therefore when any, favoured of high Jove,
Chances to pass through this adventurous glade,
Swift as the sparkle of a glancing star
I shoot from Heaven, to give him save convoy,
As now I do; but first I must put off
These my sky robes spun out of Iris' woof,[2]

[1] *i. e.* France and Spain.
[2] Cf. Par. Lost, xi. 244.

And take the weeds and likeness of a swain,
That to the service of this house belongs,
Who, with his soft pipe and smooth-dittied song,
Well knows to still the wild winds when they roar,
And hush the waving woods, nor of less faith,
And in this office of his mountain watch,
Likeliest, and nearest to the present aid
Of this occasion. But I hear the tread
Of hateful steps! I must be viewless now.

[COMUS enters with a charming rod in one hand, his glass in the other; with him a rout of monsters, headed like sundry sorts of wild beasts, but otherwise like men and women, their apparel glistering; they come in making a riotous and unruly noise, with their torches in their hands.]

COMUS.

The star that bids the shepherd fold,
Now the top of Heaven doth hold;
And the gilded car of day
His glowing axle doth allay
In the steep Atlantic stream;
And the slope sun his upward beam
Shoots against the dusky pole,
Pacing toward the other goal[1]
Of his chamber in the east.
Meanwhile welcome joy and feast,
Midnight shout and revelry,
Tipsy dance and jollity.
Braid your locks with rosy twine,
Dropping odours, dropping wine.
Rigour now is gone to bed,
And advice with scrupulous head.
Strict age, and sour severity,
With their grave saws in slumber lie
We, that are of purer fire,
Imitate the starry quire;
Who, in their nightly watchful spheres,
Lead in swift round the months and years.
The sounds and seas, with all their finny drove,
Now to the moon in wavering morrice move;
And, on the tawny sands and shelves,
Trip the pert fairies and the dapper elves.

[1] See Ps. xix. 5.

By dimpled brook, and fountain brim,
The wood-nymphs, decked with daisies trim,
Their merry wakes and pastimes keep;
What hath night to do with sleep?
Night hath better sweets to prove,
Venus now wakes, and wakens Love.
Come, let us our rites begin;
'Tis only daylight that makes sin,
Which these dun shades will ne'er report.
Hail, goddess of nocturnal sport,
Dark-veiled Cotytto![1] to whom the secret flame
Of midnight torches burns; mysterious dame,
That ne'er art called, but when the dragon womb
Of Stygian darkness spets her thickest gloom,
And makes one blot of all the air;
Stay thy cloudy ebon chair,
Wherein thou rid'st with Hecat, and befriend
Us thy vowed priests, till utmost end
Of all thy dues be done, and none left out;
Ere the blabbing eastern scout,
The nice morn, on the Indian steep
From her cabined loophole peep,
And to the tell-tale sun descry
Our concealed solemnity.
Come, knit hands, and beat the ground,
In a light fantastic round.

The Measure.

Break off, break off, I feel the different pace
Of some chaste footing near about this ground.
Run to your shrouds, within these brakes and trees;
Our number may affright: some virgin sure
(For so I can distinguish by mine art)
Benighted in these woods. Now to my charms,
And to my wily trains: I shall, ere long,
Be well stocked with as fair a herd as grazed
About my mother Circe Thus I hurl
My dazzling spells into the spongy air,
Of power to cheat the eye with blear illusion,
And give it false presentments, lest the place
And my quaint habits breed astonishment,
And put the damsel to suspicious flight,
Which must not be, for that's against my course;

[1] The goddess of immodesty, formerly worshipped at Athens with nocturnal rites.

I, under fair pretence of friendly ends,
And well-placed words of glozing courtesy,
Baited with reasons not unplausible,
Wind me into the easy-hearted man,
And hug him into snares. When once her eye
Hath met the virtue of this magic dust,
I shall appear some harmless villager,
Whom thrift keeps up about his country gear.
But here she comes; I fairly step aside,
And hearken, if I may, her business here.

[The LADY enters.]

LADY.

This way the noise was, if mine ear be true,
My best guide now: methought it was the sound
Of riot and ill-managed merriment,
Such as the jocund flute, or gamesome pipe,
Stirs up among the loose unlettered hinds,
When, for their teeming flocks, and granges full,
In wanton dance they praise the bounteous Pan,
And thank the gods amiss. I should be loth
To meet the rudeness and swilled insolence
Of such late wassailers; yet oh! where else
Shall I inform my unacquainted feet
In the blind mazes of this tangled wood?
My brothers, when they saw me wearied out
With this long way, resolving here to lodge
Under the spreading favour of these pines,
Stepped, as they said, to the next thicket side,
To bring me berries, or such cooling fruit
As the kind hospitable woods provide.
They left me then, when the gray-hooded even,
Like a sad votarist in palmer's weed,
Rose from the hindmost wheels of Phœbus' wain.
But where they are, and why they came not back,
Is now the labour of my thoughts; 'tis likeliest
They had engaged their wandering steps too far,
And envious darkness, ere they could return,
Had stole them from me; else, O thievish night!
Why shouldst thou, but for some felonious end,
In thy dark lanthorn thus close up the stars,
That nature hung in Heaven, and filled their lamps
With everlasting oil, to give due light

To the misled and lonely traveller?
This is the place, as well as I may guess,
Whence even now the tumult of loud mirth
Was rife, and perfect in my listening ear;
Yet nought but single darkness do I find.
What might this be? A thousand fantasies
Begin to throng into my memory,
Of calling shapes, and beckoning shadows dire,
And airy tongues, that syllable men's names
On sands, and shores, and desert wildernesses.
These thoughts may startle well, but not astound,
The virtuous mind, that ever walks attended
By a strong siding champion, conscience.
Oh, welcome, pure-eyed faith, white-handed hope,
Thou hovering angel girt with golden wings,
And thou unblemished form of chastity!
I see ye visibly, and now believe
That he, the Supreme Good, to whom all things ill
Are but as slavish officers of vengeance,
Would send a glistering guardian, if need were,
To keep my life and honour unassailed.
Was I deceived, or did a sable cloud
Turn forth her silver lining on the night?
I did not err, there does a sable cloud
Turn forth her silver lining on the night,
And casts a gleam over this tufted grove:
I cannot halloo to my brothers, but
Such noise as I can make to be heard farthest
I'll venture, for my new enlivened spirits
Prompt me; and they perhaps are not far off.

Song.

Sweet Echo, sweetest nymph, that liv'st unseen
Within thy airy shell,[1]
By slow Meander's margent green,
And in the violet-embroidered vale,
Where the love-lorn nightingale
Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well;
Canst thou not tell me of a gentle pair
That likest thy Narcissus are?
Oh! if thou have
Hid them in some flowery cave,
Tell me but where,
Sweet queen of parley, daughter of the sphere,

[1] The margin of Milton's MS. gives "cell." See *Newton*.

So mayst thou be translated to the skies,
And give resounding grace to all Heaven's harmonies

COMUS.

Can any mortal mixture of earth's mould
Breathe such divine enchanting ravishment?
Sure something holy lodges in that breast,
And with these raptures moves the vocal air
To testify his hidden residence:
How sweetly do they float upon the wings
Of silence, through the empty-vaulted night,
At every fall smoothing the raven down
Of darkness till it smiled! I have oft heard
My mother Circe with the Sirens three,
Amidst the flowery-kirtled Naiades
Culling their potent herbs and baleful drugs,
Who, as they sung, would take the prisoned soul
And lap it in Elysium: Scylla wept,[1]
And chid her barking waves into attention,
And fell Charybdis murmured soft applause;
Yet they in pleasing slumber lulled the sense,
And in sweet madness robbed it of itself;
But such a sacred and home-felt delight,
Such sober certainty of waking bliss,
I never heard till now. I'll speak to her,
And she shall be my queen. Hail, foreign wonder!
Whom certain these rough shades did never breed,
Unless the goddess that in rural shrine
Dwell'st here with Pan, or Sylvan; by blest song
Forbidding every bleak unkindly fog
To touch the prosperous growth of this tall wood.

LADY.

Nay, gentle shepherd, ill is lost that praise
That is addressed to unattending ears;
Not any boast of skill, but extreme shift
How to regain my severed company,
Compelled me to awake the courteous Echo
To give me answer from her mossy couch.

COMUS.

What chance, good lady, hath bereft you thus?

LADY.

Dim darkness, and this leafy labyrinth

COMUS.

Could that divide you from near-ushering guides?

[1] See Paradise Lost, ii. 260, 1019.

LADY.

They left me weary on a grassy turf.

COMUS.

By falsehood, or discourtesy, or why?

LADY.

To seek i' the valley some cool, friendly spring.

COMUS.

And left your fair side all unguarded, lady?

LADY.

They were but twain, and purposed quick return.

COMUS.

Perhaps forestalling night prevented them.

LADY.

How easy my misfortune is to hit!

COMUS.

Imports their loss, beside the present need?

LADY.

No less than if I should my brothers lose

COMUS.

Were they of manly prime, or youthful bloom?

LADY.

As smooth as Hebe's their unrazored lips.

COMUS.

Two such I saw, what time the laboured ox
In his loose traces from the furrow came,
And the swinkt[1] hedger at his supper sat;
I saw them under a green mantling vine
That crawls along the side of yon small hill,
Plucking ripe clusters from the tender shoots;
Their port was more than human, as they stood;
I took it for a fairy vision
Of some gay creatures of the element,
That in the colours of the rainbow live,
And play i' the plighted clouds. I was awe-struck,
And, as I passed, I worshipped; if those you seek,
It were a journey like the path to Heaven,
To help you find them.

LADY.

Gentle villager,
What readiest way would bring me to that place?

COMUS.

Due west it rises from this shrubby point.

[1] Tired, from swink, to toil or labour.

LADY.

To find out that, good shepherd, I suppose,
In such a scant allowance of star-light,
Would overtask the best land-pilot's art,
Without the sure guess of well-practised feet.

COMUS.

I know each lane, and every alley green,
Dingle, or bushy dell of this wild wood,
And every bosky[1] bourn from side to side,
My daily walks and ancient neighbourhood:
And if your stray attendants be yet lodged,
Or shroud within these limits, I shall know
Ere morrow wake, or the low-roosted lark
From her thatched pallet rouse: if otherwise,
I can conduct you, lady, to a low
But loyal cottage, where you may be safe
Till further quest.

LADY.

Shepherd, I take thy word,
And trust thy honest-offered courtesy,
Which oft is sooner found in lowly sheds
With smoky rafters, than in tap'stry halls
And courts of princes, where it first was named,
And yet is most pretended: in a place
Less warranted than this, or less secure,
I cannot be, that I should fear to change it.
Eye me, blest Providence, and square my trial
To my proportioned strength! Shepherd, lead on.

[The two BROTHERS.]

ELDER BROTHER.

Unmuffle, ye faint stars; and thou fair moon,
That wont'st[2] to love the traveller's benizon,
Stoop thy pale visage through an amber cloud,
And disinherit Chaos, that reigns here
In double night of darkness and of shades;
Or if your influence be quite dammed up
With black usurping mists, some gentle taper,
Though a rush-candle from the wicker hole
Of some clay habitation, visit us
With thy long levelled rule of streaming light,
And thou shalt be our star of Arcady,
Or Tyrian Cynosure.

[1] Woody. [2] Art accustomed.

SECOND BROTHER.

Or, if our eyes
Be barred that happiness, might we but hear
The folded flocks penned in their wattled cotes,
Or sound of pastoral reed with oaten stops,
Or whistle from the lodge, or village cock
Count the night watches to his feathery dames,
'Twould be some solace yet, some little cheering,
In this close dungeon of innumerous boughs.
But oh, that hapless virgin, our lost sister!
Where may she wander now? whither betake her
From the chill dew, amongst rude burs and thistles?
Perhaps some cold bank is her bolster now;
Or 'gainst the rugged bark of some broad elm
Leans her unpillowed head, fraught with sad fears.
What if in wild amazement and affright?
Or, while we speak, within the direful grasp
Of savage hunger, or of savage heat?

ELDER BROTHER.

Peace, brother! be not over-exquisite
To cast the fashion of uncertain evils;
For grant they be so, while they rest unknown,
What need a man forestall his date of grief,
And run to meet what he would most avoid?
Or if they be but false alarms of fear,
How bitter is such self-delusion!
I do not think my sister so to seek,
Or so unprincipled in virtue's book,
And the sweet peace that goodness bosoms ever,
As that the single want of light and noise
(Not being in danger, as I trust she is not)
Could stir the constant mood of her calm thoughts,
And put them into misbecoming plight.
Virtue could see to do what virtue would
By her own radiant light, though sun and moon
Were in the flat sea sunk. And wisdom's self
Oft seeks to sweet retirèd solitude,
Where, with her best nurse, contemplation,
She plumes her feathers, and lets grow her wings,
That in the various bustle of resort
Were all too ruffled, and sometimes impaired.
He that has light within his own clear breast
May sit i' the centre, and enjoy bright day;
But he that hides a dark soul and foul thoughts,

Benighted walks under the midday sun;
Himself is his own dungeon.

SECOND BROTHER.

'Tis most true,
That musing meditation most affects
The pensive secresy of desert cell,
Far from the cheerful haunt of men and herds
And sits as safe as in a senate-house;
For who would rob a hermit of his weeds,
His few books, or his beads, or maple dish,
Or do his gray hairs any violence?
But beauty, like the fair Hesperian tree
Laden with blooming gold, hath need the guard
Of dragon-watch with unenchanted eye,
To save her blossoms, and defend her fruit
From the rash hand of bold incontinence.
You may as well spread out the unsunned heaps
Of misers' treasure by an outlaw's den,
And tell me it is safe, as bid me hope
Danger will wink on opportunity,
And let a single helpless maiden pass
Uninjured in this wild surrounding waste.
Of night, or loneliness, it recks me not;
I fear the dread events that dog them both,
Lest some ill-greeting touch attempt the person
Of our unowned sister.

ELDER BROTHER.

I do not, brother,
Infer, as if I thought my sister's state
Secure without all doubt or controversy;
Yet, where an equal poise of hope and fear
Does arbitrate the event, my nature is
That I incline to hope rather than fear,
And gladly banish squint suspicion.
My sister is not so defenceless left
As you imagine: she has a hidden strength
Which you remember not.

SECOND BROTHER.

What hidden strength,
Unless the strength of Heaven, if you mean that?

ELDER BROTHER.

I mean that too; but yet a hidden strength,
Which, if Heaven gave it, may be termed her own;
'Tis chastity, my brother, chastity:

She that has that is clad in cómplete steel,
And, like a quivered nymph with arrows keen,
May trace huge forests, and unharboured heaths,
Infamous hills, and sandy perilous wilds;
Where, through the sacred rays of chastity,
No savage fierce, bandit, or mountaineer,
Will dare to soil her virgin purity:
Yea there, where very desolation dwells,
By grots and caverns shagged with horrid shades,
She may pass on with unblenched majesty,
Be it not done in pride or in presumption.
Some say no evil thing that walks by night,
In fog or fire, by lake or moorish fen,
Blue meagre hag, or stubborn unlaid ghost
That breaks his magic chains at curfew time,
No goblin, or swart fairy of the mine,
Hath hurtful power o'er true virginity.
Do ye believe me yet? or shall I call
Antiquity from the old schools of Greece
To testify the arms of chastity?
Hence had the huntress Dian her dread bow,
Fair silver-shafted queen, for ever chaste,
Wherewith she tamed the brinded lioness
And spotted mountain pard, but set at nought
The frivolous bolt of Cupid; gods and men
Feared her stern frown, and she was queen o' the woods.
What was that snaky headed Gorgon shield
That wise Minerva wore, unconquered virgin,
Wherewith she freezed her foes to congealed stone,
But rigid looks of chaste austerity,
And noble grace, that dashed brute violence
With sudden adoration and blank awe?
So dear to Heaven is saintly chastity,[1]
That when a soul is found sincerely so,
A thousand liveried angels lackey her,
Driving far off each thing of sin and guilt,
And, in clear dream, and solemn vision,
Tell her of things that no gross ear can hear;

[1] Spenser, F. Q. iii. 8, 20:—

"See how the Heavens, of voluntary grace,
And sovereign favour towards chastity,
Do succour send to her distressed case:
So much high God doth innocence embrace."—*Thyer.*

Till oft converse with heavenly habitants
Begin to cast a beam on the outward shape,
The unpolluted temple of the mind,[1]
And turns it by degrees to the soul's essence,[2]
Till all be made immortal; but when lust,
By unchaste looks, loose gestures, and foul talk,
But most by lewd and lavish act of sin,
Lets in defilement to the inward parts,
The soul grows clotted by contagion,
Embodies, and embrutes, till she quite lose
The divine property of her first being.
Such are those thick and gloomy shadows damp
Oft seen in charnel vaults and sepulchres
Lingering, and sitting by a new-made grave,
As loth to leave the body that it loved,
And linked itself by carnal sensuality
To a degenerate and degraded state.

SECOND BROTHER.

How charming is divine philosophy![3]
Nor harsh, and crabbed, as dull fools suppose,
But musical as is Apollo's lute,
And a perpetual feast of nectared sweets,
Where no crude surfeit reigns.

ELDER BROTHER.

List, list! I hear
Some far off halloo break the silent air.

SECOND BROTHER.

Methought so too; what should it be?

ELDER BROTHER.

For certain
Either some one like us night-foundered here,
Or else some neighbour woodman, or, at worst,
Some roving robber calling to his fellows.

SECOND BROTHER.

Heaven keep my sister! Again, again, and near;
Best draw and stand upon our guard.

ELDER BROTHER.

I'll halloo;
If he be friendly, he comes well; if not,
Defence is a good cause, and Heaven be for us.

[1] Cf. John ii. 21.

[2] Milton here somewhat betrays his materialist tendency.

[3] This alludes more particularly to the philosophy of Plato, who went by the surname of *divine*.

[THE ATTENDANT SPIRIT habited like a Shepherd.]

That halloo I should know; what are you? Speak!
Come not too near, you fall on iron stakes else.

SPIRIT.

What voice is that? My young lord? Speak again.

SECOND BROTHER.

O brother! tis my father's shepherd, sure.

ELDER BROTHER.

Thyrsis? whose artful strains[1] have oft delayed
The huddling brook to hear his madrigal,
And sweetened every musk-rose of the dale.
How cam'st thou here, good swain? Hath any ram
Slipped from the fold, or young kid lost his dam,
Or straggling wether the pent flock forsook?
How couldst thou find this dark sequestered nook?

SPIRIT.

O my loved master's heir, and his next joy!
I came not here on such a trivial toy
As a strayed ewe, or to pursue the stealth
Of pilfering wolf; not all the fleecy wealth
That doth enrich these downs, is worth a thought
To this my errand, and the care it brought.
But oh, my virgin lady! where is she?
How chance she is not in your company?

ELDER BROTHER.

To tell thee sadly,[2] shepherd, without blame,
Or our neglect, we lost her as we came.

SPIRIT.

Ay me unhappy! then my fears are true.

ELDER BROTHER.

What fears, good Thyrsis? Prythee briefly shew.

SPIRIT.

I'll tell ye; 'tis not vain or fabulous
(Though so esteemed by shallow ignorance)
What the sage poets, taught by the heavenly muse,
Storied of old in high immortal verse,
Of dire chimeras, and enchanted isles,
And rifted rocks whose entrance leads to Hell;
For such there be; but unbelief is blind.

[1] An elegant compliment to the musical abilities of Mr. Henry Lawes, a celebrated musician of the time, and who probably sustained the two parts of the genius of the wood and the attendant spirit. See *Newton*.

[2] Soberly, truly.

Within the navel,[1] of this hideous wood,
Immured in cypress shades, a sorcerer dwells,
Of Bacchus and of Circe born, great Comus,
Deep skilled in all his mother's witcheries;
And here to every thirsty wanderer,
By sly enticement, gives his baneful cup,
With many murmurs mixed, whose pleasing poison
The visage quite transforms of him that drinks,
And the inglorious likeness of a beast
Fixes instead, unmoulding reason's mintage
Charactered[2] in the face; this have I learnt
Tending my flocks hard by i' the hilly crofts
That brow this bottom glade; whence night by night
He and his monstrous rout are heard to howl
Like stabled wolves, or tigers at their prey,
Doing abhorréd rites to Hecate
In their obscuréd haunts of inmost bowers.
Yet have they many baits, and guileful spells
To inveigle and invite the unwary sense
Of them that pass unweeting by the way.
This evening late, by then the chewing flocks
Had ta'en their supper on the savoury herb
Of knot-grass dew-besprent,[3] and were in fold,
I sat me down to watch upon a bank
With ivy canopied, and interwove
With flaunting honeysuckle, and began,
Wrapt in a pleasing fit of melancholy,
To meditate my rural minstrelsy,
Till fancy had her fill; but, ere a close,
The wonted roar was up amidst the woods,
And filled the air with barbarous dissonance;
At which I ceased, and listened them a while,
Till an unusual stop of sudden silence
Gave respite to the drowsy-flighted[4] steeds

[1] Depth, middle.

[2] Both Spenser and Shakspeare use this word with the same accent as Milton has done here.

[3] Besprent, *i. e.* sprinkled. "Knot-grass" is mentioned in Midsummer Night's Dream, iii. 7.

[4] So the commentators have rightly restored, instead of "drowsy-frighted." Milton had in view Shakspeare, 2 Henry VI. act 4, sc. i.—

"And now loud howling wolves arouse the jades,
That drag the tragic melancholy night,
Who, with their drowsy, slow, and flagging wings,
Clip dead men's graves."

That draw the litter of close-curtained sleep;
At last a soft and solemn-breathing sound[1]
Rose like a steam of rich distilled perfumes,
And stole upon the air, that even Silence
Was took ere she was ware, and wished she might
Deny her nature, and be never more
Still to be so displaced. I was all ear,
And took in strains that might create a soul
Under the ribs of death:[2] but oh, ere long,
Too well I did perceive it was the voice
Of my most honoured lady, your dear sister.
Amazed I stood, harrowed with grief and fear,
And oh, poor hapless nightingale, thought I,
How sweet thou sing'st, how near the deadly snare!
Then down the lawns I ran with headlong haste,
Through paths and turnings often trod by day,
Till, guided by mine ear, I found the place,
Where that damned wizard, hid in sly disguise
(For so by certain signs I knew), had met
Already, ere my best speed could prevent,
The aidless innocent lady, his wished prey,
Who gently asked if he had seen such two,
Supposing him some neighbour villager.
Longer I durst not stay, but soon I guessed
Ye were the two she meant; with that I sprung
Into swift flight, till I had found you here,
But further know I not.

SECOND BROTHER.

O night and shades,
How are ye joined with Hell in triple knot
Against the unarmed weakness of one virgin
Alone, and helpless! Is this the confidence
You gave me, brother?

ELDER BROTHER.

Yes, and keep it still,
Lean on it safely; not a period
Shall be unsaid for me: against the threats
Of malice, or of sorcery, or that power
Which erring men call chance, this I hold firm:

[1] See the beginning of Twelfth Night.

[2] This grotesque comparison is taken from one of Alciat's emblems, where a soul in the figure of an infant is represented within the ribs of a skeleton, as in a prison.

Virtue may be assailed, but never hurt,[1]
Surprised by unjust force, but not enthralled;
Yea even that which mischief meant most harm,
Shall in the happy trial prove most glory:
But evil on itself shall back recoil,
And mix no more with goodness; when at last,
Gathered like scum, and settled to itself,
It shall be in eternal restless change,
Self-fed, and self-consumed:[2] if this fail,
The pillared firmament[3] is rottenness,
And earth's base built on stubble. But come, let's on.
Against the opposing will and arm of Heaven
May never this just sword be lifted up!
But for that damned magician, let him be girt
With all the grisly legions that troop
Under the sooty flag of Acheron,
Harpies and Hydras, or all the monstrous forms
'Twixt Africa and Ind, I'll find him out,
And force him to restore his purchase back,
Or drag him by the curls to a foul death,
Cursed as his life.

SPIRIT.

Alas! good venturous youth,
I love thy courage yet, and bold emprise;
But here thy sword can do thee little stead;
Far other arms, and other weapons, must
Be those that quell the might of hellish charms:
He with his bare wand can unthread thy joints,
And crumble all thy sinews.

ELDER BROTHER.

Why prythee, shepherd,
How durst thou then thyself approach so near,
As to make this relation?

SPIRIT.

Care and utmost shifts
How to secure the lady from surprisal,

[1] Milton seems to allude to the famous answer of the philosopher to a tyrant, who threatened him with death, "Thou mayst kill me, but thou canst not hurt me."—*Thyer.*

[2] This image is taken from the conjectures of astronomers concerning the dark spots which, from time to time, appear on the surface of the sun's body, and, after a while, disappear again, which they suppose to be the scum of that fiery matter, which first breeds it, and then breaks through and consumes it.—*Warburton.*

[3] Cf. Paradise Regained, iv. 455.

Brought to my mind a certain shepherd lad,
Of small regard to see to, yet well skilled
In every virtuous plant and healing herb
That spreads her verdant leaf to the morning ray:
He loved me well,[1] and oft would beg me sing,
Which when I did, he on the tender grass
Would sit, and hearken even to ecstasy,
And in requital ope his leathern scrip,
And show me simples of a thousand names,
Telling their strange and vigorous faculties:
Amongst the rest a small unsightly root,
But of divine effect, he culled me out;
The leaf was darkish, and had prickles on it;
But in another country, as he said,
Bore a bright golden flower, but not in this soil:[2]
Unknown, and like esteemed, and the dull swain
Treads on it daily with his clouted shoon;[3]
And yet more med'cinal is it than that moly[4]
That Hermes once to wise Ulysses gave;
He called it hæmony, and gave it me,
And bade me keep it as of sovran use
'Gainst all enchantments, mildew, blast, or damp,
Or ghastly furies' apparition.
I pursed it up, but little reckoning made,
Till now that this extremity compelled:
But now I find it true; for by this means
I knew the foul enchanter, though disguised,
Entered the very lime-twigs of his spells,
And yet came off: if you have this about you,
(As I will give you when we go) you may
Boldly assault the necromancer's hall;
Where if he be, with dauntless hardihood,
And brandished blade, rush on him; break his glass,

[1] This is perhaps a compliment to the author's friend and schoolfellow, Charles Deodati, who had been bred up a physician.

[2] Seward would omit "not," and substitute "light esteemed." But, as Newton observes, "*un*known and *like* esteemed" may be taken as equivalent to *un*known and *un*esteemed.

[3] So in 2 Henry VI. act 4, sc. 3. Cade says:—

> "We will not leave one lord, one gentleman;
> Spare not, but such as go in clouted shoon."

[4] See Pope's Homer's Odyssey, x. 361 sq. Pliny, Nat. Hist. xxiv. 4, speaks of it highly; but its nature and properties are unknown. Thyer thinks it was the herb called *spleenwort*.

And 'shed the luscious liquor on the ground,
But seize his wand; though he and his cursed crew
Fierce sign of battle make, and menace high,
Or like the sons of Vulcan vomit smoke,
Yet will they soon retire, if he but shrink.

ELDER BROTHER.

Thyrsis, lead on apace, I'll follow thee;
And some good angel bear a shield before us!

[The scene changes to a stately palace, set out with all manner of deliciousness; soft music, tables spread with all dainties. COMUS appears with his rabble, and the LADY set in an enchanted chair, to whom he offers his glass, which she puts by, and goes about to rise.]

COMUS.

Nay, lady, sit; if I but wave this wand,
Your nerves are all chained up in alabaster,
And you a statue, or, as Daphne was,
Root-bound, that fled Apollo.

LADY.

Fool! do not boast;
Thou canst not touch the freedom of my mind
With all thy charms, although this corporal rind
Thou hast immanacled, while Heaven sees good.

COMUS.

Why are you vexed, lady? why do you frown?
Here dwell no frowns, nor anger; from these gates
Sorrow flies far: see, here be all the pleasures
That fancy can beget on youthful thoughts,[1]
When the fresh blood grows lively, and returns
Brisk as the April buds in primrose-season.
And first behold this cordial julep here,
That flames and dances in his crystal bounds,[2]
With spirits of balm and fragrant syrups mixed.
Not that Nepenthes,[3] which the wife of Thone
In Egypt gave to Jove-born Helena,
Is of such power to stir up joy as this,
To life so friendly, or so cool to thirst.
Why should you be so cruel to yourself,

[1] An improvement on Ro neo and Juliet, act i. sc. 3.
[2] Prov. xxiii. 31: "Look not thou to the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright."
[3] See Pope's Odyssey, iv. 301, sq., and the Faërie Queen, iv. 3, 43.

And to those dainty limbs which Nature lent
For gentle usage, and soft delicacy?
But you invert the covenants of her trust,
And harshly deal, like an ill borrower,
With that which you received on other terms,
Scorning the unexempt condition
By which all mortal frailty must subsist,
Refreshment after toil, ease after pain,
That have been tired all day without repast,
And timely rest have wanted; but, fair virgin,
This will restore all soon.

LADY.

'Twill not, false traitor!
'Twill not restore the truth and honesty
That thou hast banished from thy tongue with lies.
Was this the cottage, and the safe abode,
Thou told'st me of? What grim aspects are these,
These ugly-headed monsters? Mercy guard me!
Hence with thy brewed enchantments, foul deceiver!
Hast thou betrayed my credulous innocence
With visored falsehood, and base forgery?
And wouldst thou seek again to trap me here
With liquorish baits fit to ensnare a brute?
Were it a draught for Juno when she banquets,
I would not taste thy treasonous offer; none
But such as are good men can give good things,
And that which is not good, is not delicious
To a well-governed and wise appetite.

COMUS.

Oh, foolishness of men! that lend their ears
To those budge doctors of the Stoic fur,
And fetch their precepts from the Cynic tub,
Praising the lean and sallow abstinence.
Wherefore did Nature pour her bounties forth
With such a full and unwithdrawing hand,
Covering the earth with odours, fruits, and flocks,
Thronging the seas with spawn innumerable,
But all to please and sate the curious taste?
And set to work millions of spinning worms,
That in their green shops weave the smooth-haired silk
To deck her sons; and, that no corner might
Be vacant of her plenty, in her own loins
She hutched the all-worshipped ore, and precious gems
To store her children with: if all the world

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COMUS.

Were it a draught for Juno when she banquets,
I would not taste thy treasonous offer.

Should in a pet of temperance feed on pulse,
Drink the clear stream, and nothing wear but frieze,
The All-giver would be unthanked, would be unpraised,
Not half his riches known, and yet despised;
And we should serve him as a grudging master,
As a penurious niggard of his wealth,
And live like Nature's bastards, not her sons,
Who would be quite surcharged with her own weight,
And strangled with her waste fertility; [plumes,[1]
The earth cumbered, and the winged air darked with
The herds would over-multitude their lords,
The sea o'erfraught would swell, and the unsought diamonds
Would so emblaze the forehead of the deep,
And so bestud with stars, that they below
Would grow inured to light, and come at last
To gaze upon the sun with shameless brows.
List, lady, be not coy, and be not cozened
With that same vaunted name, virginity.
Beauty is Nature's coin, must not be hoarded,
But must be current; and the good thereof
Consists in mutual and partaken bliss,
Unsavoury in the enjoyment of itself;
If you let slip time, like a neglected rose
It withers on the stalk with languished head.[2]
Beauty is Nature's brag, and must be shown
In courts, at feasts, and high solemnities,
Where most may wonder at the workmanship;
It is for homely features to keep home,[3]
They had their name thence; coarse complexios,
And cheeks of sorry grain, will serve to ply
The sampler, and to tease the housewife's wool.
What need a vermeil-tinctured lip for that,
Love-darting eyes, or tresses like the morn?

[1] The image is taken from what the ancients said of the air of the northern islands, that it was clogged and darkened with feathers.

[2] Spenser, F. Q. ii. 12, 75:—

"Gather therefore the rose, whilst yet is prime,
For soon comes age, that will her pride deflower;
Gather the rose of love, whilst yet is time,
Whilst loving thou mayst loved be with equal crime."
—*Newton.*

[3] So in the Two Gentlemen of Verona:—

"Home-keeping youths have ever homely wits."

There was another meaning in these gifts,
Think what, and be advised: you are but young yet.

LADY.

I had not thought to have unlocked my lips[1]
In this unhallowed air, but that this juggler
Would think to charm my judgment, as mine eyes,
Obtruding false rules prankt[2] in reason's garb.
I hate when vice can bolt[3] her arguments,
And virtue has no tongue to check her pride.
Impostor, do not charge most innocent Nature,
As if she would her children should be riotous
With her abundance; she, good cateress,
Means her provision only to the good,
That live according to her sober laws,
And holy dictate of spare temperance:
If every just man, that now pines with want,
Had but a moderate and beseeming share
Of that which lewdly-pampered luxury
Now heaps upon some few with vast excess,
Nature's full blessings would be well dispensed
In unsuperfluous even proportion,
And she no whit encumbered with her store;
And then the Giver would be better thanked,
His praise due paid; for swinish gluttony
Ne'er looks to Heaven amidst his gorgeous feast,
But with besotted base ingratitude
Crams, and blasphemes his Feeder. Shall I go on?
Or have I said enough? To him that dares
Arm his profane tongue with contemptuous words
Against the sun-clad power of chastity,
Fain would I something say, yet to what end?
Thou hast nor ear, nor soul, to apprehend
The sublime notion, and high mystery,
That must be uttered to unfold the sage
And serious doctrine of virginity;
And thou art worthy that thou shouldst not know
More happiness than this thy present lot.
Enjoy your dear wit, and gay rhetoric,
That hath so well been taught her dazzling fence,
Thou art not fit to hear thyself convinced;

[1] The six following lines are spoken aside.—*Sympson*
[2] Decked, dressed.
[3] Sift, or dart, aim. See *Newton*.

Yet, should I try, the uncontrolled worth
Of this pure cause would kindle my rapt spirits
To such a flame of sacred vehemence,
That dumb things would be moved to sympathize,
And the brute earth would lend her nerves, and shake,
Till all thy magic structures, reared so high,
Were shattered into heaps o'er thy false head.

COMUS.

She fables not: I feel that I do fear[1]
Her words set off by some superior power;
And though not mortal, yet a cold shuddering dew
Dips me all o'er, as when the wrath of Jove
Speaks thunder, and the chains of Erebus,
To some of Saturn's crew. I must dissemble,
And try her yet more strongly. Come, no more;
This is mere moral babble, and direct
Against the canon laws of our foundation;
I must not suffer this, yet 'tis but the lees
And settlings of a melancholy blood:
But this will cure all straight; one sip of this
Will bathe the drooping spirits in delight
Beyond the bliss of dreams. Be wise, and taste

[The BROTHERS rush in with swords drawn, wrest his glass out of his hand, and break it against the ground: his rout make sign of resistance, but are all driven in. The ATTENDANT SPIRIT comes in.]

SPIRIT.

What, have you let the false enchanter 'scape?
Oh! ye mistook, ye should have snatched his wand,
And bound him fast; without his rod reversed,
And backward mutters of dissevering power,
We cannot free the lady that sits here
In stony fetters fixed, and motionless:
Yet stay, be not disturbed; now I bethink me,
Some other means I have which may be used,
Which once of Melibœus old I learnt,
The soothest shepherd that e'er piped on plains.
There is a gentle nymph not far from hence,
That with moist curb sways the smooth Severn stream,

[1] Perhaps it is better to put a semicolon after *that*, meaning: "I feel that she does not fable," &c.—*Symson*. These six lines are also spoken aside.

Sabrina is her name, a virgin pure;
Whilome she was the daughter of Locrine,[1]
That had the sceptre from his father Brute
She, guiltless damsel, flying the mad pursuit
Of her enraged stepdame Guendolen,
Commended her fair innocence to the flood,
That stayed her flight with his cross-flowing course
The water nymphs that in the bottom played,
Held up their pearléd wrists, and took her in,
Bearing her straight to aged Nereus' hall,
Who, piteous of our woes, reared her lank head,
And gave her to his daughters to embathe
In nectared lavers strewed with asphodel,
And through the porch and inlet of each sense
Dropped in ambrosial oils till she revived,
And underwent a quick immortal change,
Made goddess of the river: still she retains
Her maiden gentleness, and oft at eve
Visits the herds along the twilight meadows,
Helping all urchin blasts, and ill-luck signs
That the shrewd meddling elf[2] delights to make,
Which she with precious vialled liquors heals;
For which the shepherds at their festivals
Carol her goodness loud in rustic lays,
And throw sweet garland wreaths into her stream
Of pansies, pinks, and gaudy daffodils.
And, as the old swain said, she can unlock
The clasping charm, and thaw the numbing spell,

[1] Locrine, king of the Britons, married Guendolen, the daughter of Corineus, Duke of Cornwall; but in secret, for fear of Corineus, he loved Estrildis, a fair captive whom he had taken in a battle with Humber, king of the Huns, and had by her a daughter equally fair, whose name was Sabrina. But when once his fear was off, by the death of Corineus, not content with secret enjoyment, divorcing Guendolen, he made Estrildis now his queen. Guendolen, all in rage, departs into Cornwall, and, gathering an army of her father's friends and subjects, gives battle to her husband by the river Sture; wherein Locrine, shot with an arrow, ends his life. But not so ends the fury of Guendolen, for Estrildis and her daughter Sabra she throws into a river; and, to leave a monument of revenge, proclaims that the stream be thenceforth called after the damsel's name, which by length of time is now called Sabrina or Severn. This is the account given by Milton himself in the first book of his History of England; but he here takes some liberties with the story, in order to heighten the character of Sabrina.—*Newton.*

[2] Puck, or Robin Goodfellow.

If she be right invoked in warbled song;
For maidenhood she loves, and will be swift
To aid a virgin, such as was herself,
In hard-besetting need: this will I try,
And add the power of some adjuring verse

Song.

Sabrina fair,
Listen where thou art sitting
Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave,
In twisted braids of lilies knitting
The loose train of thy amber-dropping hair;
Listen for dear honour's sake,
Goddess of the silver lake,
Listen, and save
Listen, and appear to us,
In name of great Oceanus;
By the earth-shaking Neptune's mace,
And Tethys' grave majestic pace,
By hoary Nereus' wrinkled look,
And the Carpathian wizard's[1] hook,
By scaly Triton's winding shell,
And old soothsaying Glaucus' spell,
By Leucothea's lovely hands,
And her son that rules the strands,
By Thetis' tinsel-slippered feet,
And the songs of sirens sweet,
By dead Parthenope's[2] dear tomb,
And fair Ligea's[3] golden comb,
Wherewith she sits on diamond rocks,
Sleeking her soft alluring locks;
By all the nymphs that nightly dance
Upon thy streams with wily glance,
Rise, rise, and heave thy rosy head
From thy coral-paven bed,
And bridle in thy headlong wave,
Till thou our summons answered have
Listen, and save.

[SABRINA rises, attended by water-nymphs, and sings.]

By the rushy-fringed bank,
Where grows the willow and the osier dank,

[1] *i. e.* Proteus.
[2] This tomb was at Naples.
[3] One of the sirens, and also a sea-nymph.

My sliding chariot stays,
Thick set with agate, and the azure sheen
Of turkis blue, and emerald green,
That in the channel strays;
Whilst from off the waters fleet
Thus I set my printless feet
O'er the cowslip's velvet head,
That bends not as I tread;
Gentle swain, at thy request
I am here.

SPIRIT.

Goddess dear,
We implore thy powerful hand
To undo the charméd band
Of true virgin here distressed,
Through the force, and through the wile,
Of unblest enchanter vile.

SABRINA.

Shepherd, 'tis my office best
To help ensnaréd chastity:
Brightest lady, look on me;
Thus I sprinkle on thy breast
Drops, that from my fountain pure
I have kept, of precious cure;
Thrice upon thy finger's tip,
Thrice upon thy rubied lip;
Next this marble venomed seat,
Smeared with gums of glutinous heat,
I touch with chaste palms moist and cold:
Now the spell hath lost his hold;
And I must haste, ere morning hour,
To wait in Amphitrite's bower.

[SABRINA descends, and the LADY rises out of her seat.]

SPIRIT.

Virgin, daughter of Locrine,
Sprung of old Anchises' line,[1]
May thy brimméd[2] waves for this
Their full tribute never miss

[1] For Locrine was the son of Brutus, who was the son of Silvius, he of Ascanius, and Ascanius of Æneas, the son of Anchises.
[2] i. e. swelling, rising to the brim.

From a thousand petty rills,
That tumble down the snowy hills:
Summer drouth, or singéd air,
Never scorch thy tresses fair,
Nor wet October's torrent flood
Thy molten crystal fill with mud:
May thy billows roll ashore
The beryl, and the golden ore;
May thy lofty head be crowned
With many a tower and terrace round,
And here and there thy banks upon[1]
With groves of myrrh and cinnamon.
Come, lady, while Heaven lends us grace,
Let us fly this curséd place,
Lest the sorcerer us entice
With some other new device.
Not a waste or needless sound
Till we come to holier ground,
I shall be your faithful guide
Through this gloomy covert wide;
And not many furlongs thence
Is your father's residence,
Where this night are met in state
Many a friend to gratulate
His wished presence; and, beside,
All the swains that near abide,
With jigs and rural dance resort:
We shall catch them at their sport;
And our sudden coming there
Will double all their mirth and cheer.
Come, let us haste, the stars grow high,
But night sits monarch yet in the mid sky

[The Scene changes, presenting Ludlow town and the PRESIDENT's castle; then come in country dancers; after them the ATTENDANT SPIRIT, with the two BROTHERS and the LADY.]

Song.

SPIRIT.

Back, shepherds, back! enough your play,
Till next sunshine holiday:

[1] *Banks* is the nominative case, as *head* was in the last line but one. The sense and syntax of the whole is, may thy head be crowned round about with towers, &c., and here and there [may] thy banks [be *crowned*] *upon* with groves, &c.—ἐπιστέφοιντο σοι αἱ ὄχθαι. The phrase is Greek.—*Calton.*

Here be, without duck or nod,
Other trippings to be trod
Of lighter toes, and such court guise
As Mercury did first devise,
With the mincing Dryades,
On the lawns, and on the leas.[1]

[This second Song presents them to their Father and Mother.]

Noble lord, and lady bright,
I have brought ye new delight;
Here behold, so goodly grown,
Three fair branches of your own;
Heaven hath timely tried their youth,
Their faith, their patience, and their truth,
And sent them here through hard assays
With a crown of deathless praise,
To triumph in victorious dance
O'er sensual folly and intemperance.

[The dances ended, the SPIRIT epilogises.]

SPIRIT.

To the ocean now I fly,[2]
And those happy climes that lie
Where day never shuts his eye,
Up in the broad fields of the sky:
There I suck the liquid air
All amidst the gardens fair
Of Hesperus, and his daughters three,
That sing about the golden tree:
Along the crispéd shades and bowers
Revels the spruce and jocund Spring,
The Graces, and the rosy-bosomed Hours,
Thither all their bounties bring:
There eternal Summer dwells,
And west winds, with musky wing,
About the cedarn alleys fling
Nard and cassia's balmy smells.
Iris there with humid bow
Waters the odorous banks, that blow

[1] Pastures, corn-fields.
[2] A paraphrase of Ariel's song in the "Tempest:"—
"Where the bee sucks, there lurk I."

Flowers of more mingled hue
Than her purfled[1] scarf can shew,
And drenches with Elysian dew
(List, mortals, if your ears be true)
Beds of hyacinth and roses,
Where young Adonis oft reposes,
Waxing well of his deep wound
In slumber soft, and on the ground
Sadly sits the Assyrian queen;[2]
But far above, in spangled sheen,
Celestial Cupid, her famed son, advanced,
Holds his dear Psyche sweet entranced,
After her wandering labours long,
Till free consent the gods among
Make her his eternal bride,
And from her fair unspotted side
Two blissful twins are to be born,
Youth and Joy; so Jove hath sworn.
But now my task is smoothly done;
I can fly, or I can run
Quickly to the green earth's end,
Where the bowed welkin slow doth bend,
And from thence can soar as soon
To the corners of the moon.
Mortals, that would follow me,
Love Virtue; she alone is free:
She can teach ye how to climb
Higher than the sphery chime;
Or, if Virtue feeble were,
Heaven itself would stoop to her.[3]

[1] Flourished, embroided with the needle.

[2] Venus, so called, because she was first worshipped by the Assyrians.

[3] "Comus," observes Hallam, "was sufficient to convince any one of taste and feeling, that a great poet had arisen in England, and one partly formed in a different school from his contemporaries. Many of them had produced highly beautiful and imaginative passages; but none had evinced so classical a judgment, none had aspired to so regular a perfection. Jonson had learned much from the ancients, but there was a grace in their best models which he did not quite attain. Neither his 'Sad Shepherd,' nor the 'Faithful Shepherdess' of Fletcher, have the elegance or dignity of 'Comus.' A noble virgin and her young brothers, by whom this masque was originally represented, required an elevation, a purity, a sort of severity of sentiment which no one in that age could have given but Milton. He avoided, and nothing loth, the more festive notes which dramatic poetry was

XVII

LYCIDAS.[1]

[In this monody the author bewails a learned friend, Mr. Edward King, who was unfortunately drowned in his passage from Chester on the Irish seas, 1637, and by occasion foretels the ruin of our corrupted clergy, then in their height.]

YET once more, O ye laurels! and once more
Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere,
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,
And with forced fingers rude
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.
Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear,
Compels me to disturb your season due;
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer:
Who would not sing for Lycidas? He knew
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.
He must not float upon his watery bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
Without the meed of some melodious tear.

wont to mingle with its serious strain. But for this he was compensated by the brightest hues of fancy, and the sweetest melody of song. In 'Comus' we find nothing prosaic or feeble, no false taste in the incidents, and not much in the language, nothing over which we should desire to pass on a second perusal. The want of what we may call personality, none of the characters having names, except Comus himself, who is a very indefinite being, and the absence of all positive attributes of time and place, enhance the ideality of the fiction by a certain indistinctness not unpleasing to the imagination."

[1] "It has been said, I think very fairly, that Lycidas is a good test of real feeling for what is peculiarly called poetry. Many, or perhaps we might say most readers, do not taste its excellence; nor does it follow that they may not greatly admire Pope and Dryden, or even Virgil and Homer. It is, however, somewhat remarkable, that Johnson, who has committed his critical reputation by the most contemptuous depreciation of this poem, had, in an earlier part of his life, selected the tenth Eclogue of Virgil for peculiar praise; the tenth Eclogue, which, beautiful as it is, belongs to the same class of pastoral

Begin then, sisters, of the sacred well,[1]
That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring,
Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.
Hence with denial vain, and coy excuse,
So may some gentle muse
With lucky words favour my destined urn,
And, as he[2] passes, turn
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud:
For we were nursed upon the self-same hill,
Fed the same flock by fountain, shade, and rill.
Together both, ere the high lawns appeared
Under the opening eyelids of the morn,
We drove afield, and both together heard
What time the gray fly winds her sultry horn,
Battening our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
Oft till the star that rose, at evening, bright,
Toward Heaven's descent had sloped his westering[3] wheel.
Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute,
Tempered to the oaten flute;
Rough satyrs danced, and fauns with cloven heel
From the glad sound would not be absent long,
And old Damætas[4] loved to hear our song.
But oh, the heavy change, now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone, and never must return!
Thee, shepherd, thee the woods, and desert caves
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,
And all their echoes mourn.
The willows, and the hazel copses green,

and personal allegory, and requires the same sacrifice of reasoning criticism, as the Lycidas itself. In the age of Milton, the poetical world had been accustomed by the Italian and Spanish writers to a more abundant use of allegory than has been pleasing to their posterity; but Lycidas is not so much in the nature of an allegory as of a masque; the characters pass before our eyes in imagination, as on the stage; they are chiefly mythological, but not creations of the poet. Our sympathy with the fate of Lycidas may not be much stronger than for the desertion of Gallus by his mistress; but many poems will yield an exquisite pleasure to the imagination that produce no emotion in the heart; or none at least, except through associations independent of the subject."—*Hallam.*

[1] Fountain.

[2] So the muse is made *masculine* in Samson Agonistes, ver. 973.

[3] Drawing towards the west.

[4] He probably means Dr. William Chappel, who had been tutor to them both, and afterwards became Bishop of Cork and Ross.

Shall now no more be seen,
Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.
As killing as the canker to the rose,
Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,
Or frost to flowers, that their gay wardrobe wear,
When first the white-thorn blows;
Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherds' ear.
Where were ye, nymphs, when the remorseless deep
Closed o'er the head of your loved Lycidas?
For neither were ye playing on the steep,
Where your old bards, the famous Druids, lie;
Nor on the shaggy top of Mona[1] high,
Nor yet where Deva[2] spreads her wizard stream:
Ay me! I fondly dream
Had ye been there, for what could that have done?
What could the muse herself that Orpheus bore,
The muse herself for her enchanting son,
Whom universal nature did lament,
When by the rout that made the hideous roar,
His gory visage down the stream was sent,
Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore?
Alas! what boots it with incessant care
To tend the homely slighted shepherd's trade,
And strictly meditate the thankless muse?
Were it not better done as others use,
To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair?
Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
(That last infirmity of noble mind)
To scorn delights, and live laborious days,
But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
Comes the blind fury with the abhorred shears,
And slits the thin-spun life. "But not the praise,"
Phœbus replied, and touched my trembling ears;
"Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
Nor in the glistering foil
Set off to the world, nor in broad rumour lies,
But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes,
And perfect witness of all-judging Jove;
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in Heaven expect thy meed."

[1] The Isle of Anglesea.
[2] The River Dee. The word *Deva* is supposed to mean *divina*.

O fountain Arethuse,[1] and thou honoured flood,
Smooth-sliding Mincius, crowned with vocal reeds,
That strain I heard was of a higher mood:
But now my oat proceeds,
And listens to the herald of the sea
That came in Neptune's plea;
He asked the waves, and asked the felon winds,
What hard mishap had doomed this gentle swain?
And questioned every gust of rugged wings,
That blows from off each beaked promontory:
They knew not of his story,
And sage Hippotades[2] their answer brings,
That not a blast was from his dungeon strayed,
The air was calm, and on the level brine
Sleek Panope with all her sisters played.
It was that fatal and perfidious bark
Built in the eclipse, and rigged with curses dark,
That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.
Next Camus,[3] reverend sire, went footing slow,
His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge,
Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge,
Like to that sanguine flower inscribed with woe.[4]
"Ah! who hath reft," quoth he, "my dearest pledge?"
Last came, and last did go,
The pilot of the Galilean lake,[5]

[1] Now Phœbus, whose strain was of a higher mood, has done speaking, he invokes the *fountain Arethuse* of Sicily, the country of Theocritus, and Mincius, the river of Mantua, Virgil's country, in compliment to those poets.

[2] Æolus, the son of Hippotas.

[3] The Cam, the river of Cambridge.

[4] Meaning the hyacinth, the leaves of which were supposed to be marked with the mournful letters Aι, Aι. Cf. Ovid, Met. x. 210 sqq.

[5] "The introduction of St. Peter after the fabulous deities of the sea, has appeared an incongruity deserving of censure to some admirers of this poem. It would be very reluctantly that we could abandon to this criticism the most splendid passage it presents. But the censure rests, as I think, on too narrow a principle. In narrative or dramatic poetry, where something like illusion or momentary belief is to be produced, the mind requires an objective possibility, a capacity of real existence, not only in all the separate portions of the imagined story, but in their coherency and relation to a common whole. Whatever is obviously incongruous, whatever shocks our previous knowledge of possibility, destroys, to a certain extent, that acquiescence in the fiction which it is the true business of the fiction to produce. But the case is not the same in such poems as Lycidas. They pretend to no credibility, they aim at no illusion, they are read

Two massy keys he bore, of metals twain
(The golden opes, the iron shuts amain),
He shook his mitred locks, and stern bespake:
" How well could I have spared for thee, young swain,
Enow of such as for their bellies' sake
Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold!
Of other care they little reckoning make,
Than how to scramble at the shearer's feast,
And shove away the worthy bidden guest;
Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold
A sheep-hook, or have learned aught else the least
That to the faithful herdsman's art belongs!
What recks it them? What need they? They are sped;
And when they list, their lean and flashy songs
Grate on their scrannel[1] pipes of wretched straw;
The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
But swollen with wind, and the rank mist they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread:
Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
Daily devours apace, and nothing said.
But that two-handed engine at the door
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more."
Return, Alpheus, the dread voice is past,
That shrunk thy streams; return Sicilian muse,
And call the vales, and bid them hither cast
Their bells and flowerets of a thousand hues
Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use
Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,
On whose fresh lap the swart star sparely looks,
Throw hither all your quaint enamelled eyes,
That on the green turf suck the honeyed showers,
And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,
The white pink, and the pansy freaked with jet,
The glowing violet,

with the willing abandonment of the imagination to a waking dream, and require only that general possibility, that combination of images, which common experience does not reject as incompatible, without which the fancy of the poet would be only like that of the lunatic. And it had been so usual to blend sacred with mythological personages in allegory, that no one, probably, in Milton's age, would have been struck by the objection."—*Hallam.*

[1] Probably equivalent to the Latin " stridens," creaking, piercing.

The musk-rose, and the well-attired woodbine,
With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
And every flower that sad embroidery wears:
Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,
And daffodillies fill their cups with tears,
To strow the laureate hearse where Lycid lies.
For so to interpose a little ease,
Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise.
Ay me! whilst thee the shores and sounding seas
Wash far away, where ere thy bones are hurled,
Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
Where thou, perhaps, under the whelming tide
Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world;
Or whether thou to our moist vows denied,
Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus[1] old,
Where the great vision of the guarded mount
Looks toward Namancos and Bayona's[2] hold;
Look homeward, angel now, and melt with ruth:[3]
And, O ye dolphins,[4] waft the hapless youth.
Weep no more, woeful shepherds, weep no more,
For Lycidas your sorrow is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor;
So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new-spangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky:
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
Through the dear might of him that walked the waves,
Where other groves and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
There entertain him all the saints above,
In solemn troops, and sweet societies,
That sing, and singing in their glory move.
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.

[1] Probably Bellerus, one of the Cornish giants, fabulously supposed to dwell at the Land's End.

[2] A watch-tower and lighthouse formerly stood on the promontory called the Land's End, and looked, as Orosius says, towards another high tower at Brigantia in Gallicia, and consequently towards *Bayona's Hold.—Newton.*

[3] Pity.

[4] A dolphin is said to have carried the body of Palæmon to the shore of Corinth, where he was deified.

Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more;
Henceforth thou art the genius of the shore.
In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood.
Thus sang the uncouth swain to the oaks and rills,
While the still morn went out with sandals gray,
He touched the tender stops of various quills,
With eager thought warbling his Doric lay:
And now the sun had stretched out all the hills,
And now was dropped into the western bay;
At last he rose, and twitched his mantle blue.
To morrow to fresh woods, and pastures new

XVIII.

THE FIFTH ODE OF HORACE, LIB. I.

["Quis multa gracilis te puer in rosa," rendered almost word for word without rhyme, according to the Latin measure, as near as the language will permit.]

WHAT slender youth, bedewed with liquid odours,
Courts thee on roses in some pleasant cave,
Pyrrha? For whom bind'st thou
In wreaths thy golden hair,
Plain in thy neatness? Oh, how oft shall he
On faith and changed gods complain, and seas
Rough with black winds and storms
Unwonted shall admire!
Who now enjoys thee credulous, all gold;
Who always vacant, always amiable,
Hopes thee, of flattering gales
Unmindful. Hapless they
To whom thou untried seem'st fair. Me in my vowed
Picture the sacred wall declares to have hung
My dank and dropping weeds
To the stern god of sea.

AD PYRRHAM. ODE V.

Horatius ex Pyrrhæ illecebris tanquam è naufragio enataverat, cujus amore irretitos, affirmat esse miseros.

Quis multa gracilis te puer in rosa
Perfusus liquidis urget odoribus,
Grato, Pyrrha, sub antro?
Cui flavam religas comam
Simplex munditiis? heu quoties fidem
Mutatosque deos flebit, et aspera
Nigris æquora ventis
Emirabitur insolens!
Qui nunc te fruitur credulus aurea,
Qui semper vacuam semper amabilem
Sperat, nescius auræ
Fallacis. Miseri quibus
Intentata nites. Me tabula sacer
Votiva paries indicat uvida
Suspendisse potenti
Vestimenta maris Deo.

XIX.

ON THE NEW FORCERS OF CONSCIENCE UNDER THE LONG PARLIAMENT.

Because you have thrown off your prelate lord,
And with stiff vows renounced his liturgy,
To seize the widowed whore Plurality
From them whose sin ye envied, not abhorred,
Dare ye for this adjure the civil sword
To force our consciences that Christ set free,
And ride us with a classic hierarchy
Taught ye by mere A. S. and Rotherford?
Men whose life, learning, faith, and pure intent
Would have been held in high esteem with Paul,
Must now be named and printed heretics
By shallow Edwards[1] and Scotch what d'ye call:[2]

[1] The author of the *Gangræna* (published in 1646), or "a Catalogue and Discovery of many of the errors, heresies, and blasphemies, and pernicious practices of the sectaries of this time, vented and acted in England in these four last years."—*Thyer.*

[2] Possibly the famous Alexander Henderson, or George Gillespie, a Scotch minister and commissioner at Westminster.—*Newton.*

But we do hope to find out all your tricks,
Your plots and packing worse than those of Trent,
That so the Parliament
May, with their wholesome and preventive shears,
Clip your phylacteries, though bauk your ears,[1]
And succour our just fears,
When they shall read this clearly in your charge,
New Presbyter is but Old Priest writ large.

[1] He alludes to Prynne, who had been sentenced to have his ears cropped, and was afterwards sentenced to lose the rest of them.

Sonnets.

I.

TO THE NIGHTINGALE.

O Nightingale, that on yon bloomy spray
Warblest at eve, when all the woods are still,
Thou with fresh hope the lover's heart dost fill,
While the jolly hours lead on propitious May.
Thy liquid notes that close the eye of day,
First heard before the shallow cuckoo's bill,
Portend success in love; oh, if Jove's will
Have linked that amorous power to thy soft lay,
Now timely sing, ere the rude bird of hate
Foretell my hopeless doom in some grove nigh;
As though from year to year hast sung too late
For my relief, yet hadst no reason why:
Whether the Muse, or Love, call thee his mate,
Both them I serve, and of their train am I.

II.

Donna leggiadra il cui bel nome honora
L'herbosa val di Rheno, e il nobil varco,
Bene è colui d'ogni valore scarco
Qual tuo spirto gentil non innamora,
Che dolcemente mostra si di fuora
De sui atti soavi giamai parco,
E i don', che son d'amor saette ed arco,
La onde l'alta tua virtu s'infiora.
Quando tu vaga parli, o lieta canti
Che mover possa duro alpestre legno.
Guardi ciascun a gli occhi, ed a gli orecchi

L'entrata, chi di te si truova indegno;
Grazia sola di su gli vaglia, inanti
Che 'l disio amoroso al cuor s' invecchi

III.

Qual in colle aspro, al imbrunir di sera
L' avezza giovinetta pastorella
Va bagnando l' herbetta strana e bella
Che mal si spande a disusata spera
Fuor di sua natia alma primavera,
Cosi Amor meco insù la lingua snella
Desta il fior novo di strania favella,
Mentre io di te, vezzosamente altera,
Canto, dal mio buon popol non inteso,
E 'l bel Tamigi cangio col bel Arno.
Amor lo volse, ed io a l' altrui peso
Seppi ch' Amor cosa mai volse indarno
Deh! foss' il mio cuor lento e 'l duro seno
A chi pianta dal ciel si buon terreno.

CANZONE.

Ridonsi donne e giovani amorosi
M' accostandosi attorno, e perche scrivi,
Perche tu scrivi in lingua ignota e strana
Verseggiando d' amor, e come t' osi?
Dinne, se la tua speme sia mai vana,
E de pensieri lo miglior t' arrivi;
Cosi mi van burlando, altri rivi
Altri lidi t' aspettan, et altre onde
Nelle cui verdi sponde
Spuntati ad hor, ad hor a la tua chioma
L' immortal guiderdon d' eterne frondi;
Perche alle spalle tue soverchia soma?
Canzon dirotti, e tu per me rispondi
Dice mia Donna, e 'l suo dir, e il mio cuore
Questa e lingua di cui si vanta Amore.

IV.

Diodati, e te 'l dirò con maraviglia,
Quel ritroso io ch' amor spreggiar soléa
E de suoi lacci spesso mi ridéa
Gia caddi, ov' huom dabben talhor s' impiglia

Ne treccie d' oro, ne guancia vermigiia
M' abbaglian si, ma sotto nova idea
Pellegrina bellezza che' l cuor bea,
Portamenti alti honesti, e nelle ciglia
Quel sereno fulgor d' amabil nero,
Parole adorne di lingua piu d' una,
E 'l cantar che di mezzo l' hemispero
Traviar ben puo la faticosa Luna,
E degli occhi suoi auventa si gran fuoco
Che l' incerar gli orecchi mi fia poco.

V.

Per certo i bei vostr' occhi, Donna mia
Esser non puo che non sian lo mio sole
Si mi percuoton forte, come ei suole
Per l arene di Libia chi s' invia,
Mentre un caldo vapor (ne sentì pria)
Da quel lato si spinge ove mi duole,
Che forse amanti nelle lor parole
Chiaman sospir; io non so che si sia:
Parte rinchiusa, e turbida si cela
Scosso mi il petto, e poi n'uscendo poco
Quivi d' attorno o s' agghiaccia, o s' ingiela,
Ma quanto a gli occhi giunge a trovar loco
Tutte le notti a me suol far piovose
Finche mia Alba rivien colma di rose.

VI

Giovane piano, e semplicetto amante,
Poi che fuggir me stesso in dubbio sono,
Madonna a voi del mio cuor l' humil dono
Faro divoto; io certo a prove tante
L' hebbi fedele, intrepido, costante,
De pensieri leggiadro, accorto, e buono;
Quando rugge il gran mondo, e scocca il tuono,
S' arma di se, e d' intero diamante;
Tanto dei forse, e d' invidia sicuro,
Di timori, e speranze al popol use
Quanto d' ingegno, e d' alto valor vago,
E di cetra sonora, e delle muse:
Sol troverete in tal parte men dur
Ove Amor mise l' insanabil ago.

VII.

ON HIS BEING ARRIVED AT THE AGE OF TWENTY-THREE.[1]

How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth,
Stolen on his wing my three-and-twentieth year!
My hasting days fly on with full career,
But my late spring no bud or blossom shew'th
Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth,
That I to manhood am arrived so near,
And inward ripeness doth much less appear,
That some more timely-happy spirits endu'th
Yet be it less or more, or soon or slow,
It shall be still in strictest measure even
To that same lot, however mean or high,
Toward which Time leads me, and the will of Heaven;
All is, if I have grace to use it so,
As ever in my great Task-Master's eye.

VIII.

WHEN THE ASSAULT WAS INTENDED TO THE CITY.

Captain or colonel, or knight in arms,
Whose chance on these defenceless doors may seize,
If deed of honour did thee ever please,
Guard them, and him within protect from harms.
He can requite thee, for he knows the charms
That call fame on such gentle acts as these,
And he can spread thy name o'er lands and seas,
Whatever clime the sun's bright circle warms.
Lift not thy spear against the Muses' bower:
The great Emathian conqueror[2] bid spare
The house of Pindarus, when temple and tower
Went to the ground: and the repeated air
Of sad Electra's poet[3] had the power
To save the Athenian walls from ruin bare.

[1] Written in 1631. [2] Alexander the Great.

[3] Sophocles. It is said that the repetition of some verses from his "Electra" inspired the Athenians to resist an attempt made by Lysander to change the government, reduce the Athenians to slavery, and desolate the city.

IX.

TO A VIRTUOUS YOUNG LADY.

Lady, that in the prime of earliest youth
Wisely hast shunned the broad way and the green
And with those few art eminently seen,
That labour up the hill of heavenly truth,
The better part with Mary and with Ruth
Chosen thou hast; and they that overween,
And at their growing virtues fret their spleen,
No anger find in thee, but pity and ruth.
Thy care is fixed, and zealously attends
To fill thy odorous lamp with deeds of light,
And hope that reaps not shame Therefore be sure
Thou, when the bridegroom with his feastful friends
Passes to bliss at the mid hour of night,
Hath gained thy entrance, virgin wise and pure.

X.

TO THE LADY MARGARET LEY.

Daughter to that good earl,[1] once President
Of England's Council, and her Treasury,
Who lived in both, unstained with gold or fee.
And left them both, more in himself content,
Till sad the breaking of that Parliament
Broke him, as that dishonest victory
At Chæronea, fatal to liberty,
Killed with report that old man eloquent.
Though later born than to have known the days
Wherein your father flourished, yet by you,
Madam, methinks I see him living yet;
So well your words his noble virtues praise,
That all both judge you to relate them true,
And to possess them, honoured Margaret.

[1] Sir James Ley, afterwards made Earl of Marlborough, and raised to the highest offices in the state.

XI.

ON THE DETRACTION WHICH FOLLOWED UPON MY WRITING CERTAIN TREATISES.[1]

A book was writ of late, called "Tetrachordon,"
And woven close, both matter, form, and style;
The subject new: it walked the town a while,
Numbering good intellects; now seldom pored on.
Cries the stall-reader, Bless us! what a word on
A title-page is this! and some in file
Stand spelling false, while one might walk to Mile-
End Green. Why is it harder, sirs, than Gordon,
Colkitto, or Macdonnel, or Galasp?[2]
Those rugged names to our like mouths grow sleek,
That would have made Quintilian stare and gasp.
Thy age, like ours, O soul of Sir John Cheek,[3]
Hated not learning worse than toad or asp,
When thou taught'st Cambridge, and king Edward, Greek.

XII.

ON THE SAME.

I did but prompt the age to quit their clogs
By the known rules of ancient liberty,
When straight a barbarous noise environs me
Of owls and cuckoos, asses, apes, and dogs:
As when those hinds that were transformed to frogs[4]
Railed at Latona's twin-born progeny,
Which after held the sun and moon in fee.
But this is got by casting pearl to hogs,
That bawl for freedom in their senseless mood,
And still revolt when truth would set them free.
License they mean when they cry "Liberty!"
For who loves that, must first be wise and good;
But from that mark how far they rove we see
For all this waste of wealth, and loss of blood.

[1] Viz., those upon divorce, in which he gave great offence to the Presbyterian clergy.

[2] Probably some ministers who opposed him.

[3] The first professor of Greek in the University of Cambridge.

[4] The Lycian shepherds, who were changed into frogs.—Ovid, Met. vi. fab. 4.

XIII.

TO MR. H. LAWES[1] ON HIS AIRS.

HARRY, whose tuneful and well-measured song
First taught our English music how to span
Words with just note and accent, not to scan
With Midas' ears, committing short and long;
Thy worth and skill exempts thee from the throng,
With praise enough for envy to look wan;
To after age thou shalt be writ the man,
That with smooth air couldst humour best our tongue.
Thou honour'st verse, and verse must lend her wing
To honour thee, the priest of Phœbus' quire,
That tun'st their happiest lines in hymn or story
Dante shall give Fame leave to set thee higher
Than his Casella, whom he wooed to sing
Met in the milder shades of purgatory[2]

XIV.

ON THE RELIGIOUS MEMORY OF MRS. CATHARINE THOMSON, MY CHRISTIAN FRIEND.

Deceased 16th December, 1646.

WHEN faith and love, which parted from thee never,
Had ripened thy just soul to dwell with God,
Meekly thou didst resign this earthly load
Of death, called life; which us from life doth sever.
Thy works and alms and all thy good endeavour
Stayed not behind, nor in the grave were trod;
But as faith pointed with her golden rod,
Followed thee up to joy and bliss for ever.
Love led them on, and faith, who knew them best
Thy handmaids, clad them o'er with purple beams
And azure wings, that up they flew so drest,
And spake the truth of thee on glorious themes
Before the Judge, who thenceforth bid thee rest
And drink thy fill of pure immortal streams.

[1] See notes on "Comus."
[2] See the second canto of Dante's "Purgatory."

XV

TO THE LORD GENERAL FAIRFAX.[1]

Fairfax, whose name in arms through Europe rings,
Filling each mouth with envy or with praise,
And all her jealous monarchs with amaze
And rumours loud, that daunt remotest kings,
Thy firm unshaken virtue ever brings
Victory home, though new rebellions raise
Their Hydra heads, and the false north displays
Her broken league to imp their serpent wings
Oh! yet a nobler task awaits thy hand
(For what can war but endless war still breed?)
Till truth and right from violence be freed,
And public faith cleared from the shameful brand
Of public fraud. In vain doth valour bleed,
While avarice and rapine share the land.

XVI.

TO THE LORD GENERAL CROMWELL.

Cromwell, our chief of men, who through a cloud
Not of war only, but detractions rude,
Guided by faith and matchless fortitude,
To peace and truth thy glorious way hast ploughed,
And on the neck of crowned fortune proud
Hast reared God's trophies, and his work pursued,
While Darwen stream[2] with blood of Scots imbrued,
And Dunbar field resounds thy praises loud,
And Worcester's laureate wreath. Yet much remains
To conquer still; peace hath her victories
No less renowned than war: new foes arise
Threatening to bind our souls with secular chains:
Help us to save free conscience from the paw
Of hireling wolves, whose gospel is their maw.

[1] The three following poems are not, for obvious reasons, found in the editions of Milton published during the reign of Charles II.

[2] Near Preston, in Lancashire.

XVI.

TO SIR HENRY VANE THE YOUNGER.

VANE, young in years, but in sage counsel old,
Than whom a better senator ne'er held
The helm of Rome, when gowns not arms repelled
The fierce Epirot and the African bold;
Whether to settle peace, or to unfold
The drift of hollow states hard to be spelled,
Then to advise how war may best upheld
Move by her two main nerves, iron and gold,
In all her equipage; besides to know
Both spiritual power and civil, what each means,
What severs each, thou hast learned, which few have
The bounds of either sword to thee we owe; [done:
Therefore, on thy firm hand religion leans
In peace, and reckons thee her eldest son.

XVII.

ON THE LATE MASSACRE IN PIEMONT.[1]

AVENGE, O Lord! thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold;
Even them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshipped stocks and stones,
Forget not: in thy book record their groans
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piemontese that rolled
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans

[1] Probably written in 1655. Newton observes: "This prayer, in behalf of the persecuted Protestants, was not entirely without effect. For Cromwell exerted himself in their favour, and his behaviour in this whole transaction is greatly to his honour, even as it is related by an historian, who was far from being partial to his memory. 'Nor would the Protector be backward in such a work, which might give the world a particular opinion of his piety and zeal for the Protestant religion; but he proclaimed a solemn fast, and caused large contributions to be gathered for them throughout the kingdom of England and Wales. Nor did he rest here, but sent his agents to the Duke of Savoy, a prince with whom he had no correspondence or commerce, and the next year so engaged the Cardinal of France, and even terrified the Pope himself, without so much as doing any favour to the English

The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To Heaven. Their martyred blood and ashes sow
O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple tyrant; that from these may grow
A hundredfold, who having learned thy way
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

XIX.

ON HIS BLINDNESS.

When I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide;
And that one talent which is death to hide,[1]
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest he returning chide;
Doth God exact day-labour, light denied,
I fondly ask? But Patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, God doth not need
Either man's work or his own gifts; who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best: his state
Is kingly; thousands at his bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait.

XX.

TO MR. LAWRENCE.[2]

Lawrence, of virtuous father virtuous son,
Now that the fields are dank, and ways are mire,
Where shall we sometimes meet, and by the fire
Help waste a sullen day, what may be won

Roman Catholics, that that Duke thought it necessary to restore all that he had taken from them, and renewed all those privileges they had formerly enjoyed—so great was the terror of his name; nothing being more usual than his saying that his ships in the Mediterranean should visit Civita Vecchia, and the sound of his cannon should be heard in Rome.'—See Echard, vol. 2."

[1] An allusion to the parable in Matthew xxv.

[2] Son of the president of Cromwell's council.

From the hard season gaining? Time will run
On smoother, till Favonius[1] re-inspire
The frozen earth, and clothe in fresh attire
The lily and rose, that neither sowed nor spun.
What neat repast shall feast us, light and choice,
Of Attic taste, with wine, whence we may rise
To hear the lute well touched, or artful voice
Warble immortal notes and Tuscan air?
He who of those delights can judge, and spare
To interpose them oft, is not unwise

XXI.

TO CYRIAC SKINNER.[2]

Cyriac, whose grandsire on the royal bench
Of British Themis, with no mean applause
Pronounced, and in his volumes taught, our laws,
Which others at their bar so often wrench;
To-day deep thoughts resolve with me to drench
In mirth, that after no repenting draws;
Let Euclid rest, and Archimedes pause,
And what the Swede intends,[3] and what the French.[4]
To measure life learn thou betimes, and know
Toward solid good what leads the nearest way
For other things mild Heaven a time ordains,
And disapproves that care, though wise in show,
That with superfluous burden loads the day,
And, when God sends a cheerful hour, refrains.

XXII.

TO THE SAME.

Cyriac, this three years' day these eyes, though clear,
To outward view, of blemish or of spot,
Bereft of light their seeing have forgot,
Nor to their idle orbs doth sight appear

[1] *i. e.*, Zephyr, the spring western wind.
[2] Son of William Skinner, by Bridget, daughter of Lord Coke, and a distinguished member of Harrington's political club.
[3] *i. e.*, Charles Gustavus, who was then waging war with Poland.
[4] The French were then at war in the Netherlands.

Of sun, or moon, or star throughout the year,
Or man, or woman. Yet I argue not
Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot
Of heart or hope; but still bear up, and steer
Right onward. What supports me, dost thou ask?
The conscience, friend, to have lost them overplied
In liberty's defence, my noble task,
Of which all Europe talks from side to side. [mask
This thought might lead me through the world's vain
Content, though blind, had I no better guide.

XXIII

ON HIS DECEASED WIFE.

Methought I saw my late espoused saint
Brought to me like Alcestis from the grave,
Whom Jove's great son to her glad husband gave,
Rescued from death by force, though pale and faint.
Mine, as whom washed from spot of child-bed taint
Purification in the old law did save;
And such, as yet once more I trust to have
Full sight of her in Heaven without restraint,
Came vested all in white, pure as her mind:
Her face was veiled, yet to my fancied sight
Love, sweetness, goodness, in her person shined
So clear, as in no face with more delight.
But oh! as to embrace me she inclined,
I waked, she fled, and day brought back my night.

Psalms.

PSALM I.

Done into Verse, 1653.

Blessed is the man who hath not walked astray
In council of the wicked, and i' the way
Of sinners hath not stood, and in the seat
Of scorners hath not sat. But in the great
Jehovah's law is ever his delight,
And in his law he studies day and night.
He shall be as a tree which planted grows
By watery streams, and in his season knows
To yield his fruit, and his leaf shall not fall,
And what he takes in hand shall prosper all.
Not so the wicked, but as chaff which fanned
The wind drives, so the wicked shall not stand
In judgment, or abide their trial then,
Nor sinners in the assembly of just men.
For the Lord knows the upright way of the just,
And the way of bad men to ruin must.

PSALM II.

Done August 8, 1653.

Terzette.

Why do the Gentiles tumult, and the nations
Muse a vain thing; the kings of the earth upstand
With power, and princes in their congregations
Lay deep their plots together through each land

Against the Lord and his Messiah dear?
Let us break off, say they, by strength of hand
Their bonds, and cast from us, no more to wear,
Their twisted cords: he who in Heaven doth dwell
Shall laugh, the Lord shall scoff them, then severe
Speak to them in his wrath, and in his fell
And fierce ire trouble them; but I, saith he,
Anointed have my King (though ye rebel)
On Sion my holy hill. A firm decree
I will declare. the Lord to me hath said,
Thou art my Son, I have begotten thee
This day; ask of me, and the grant is made
As thy possession I on thee bestow
The Heathen, and as thy conquest to be swayed
Earth's utmost bounds: them shalt thou bring full low
With iron sceptre bruised, and them disperse
Like to a potter's vessel shivered so.
And now be wise at length, ye kings averse;
Be taught, ye judges of the earth; with fear
Jehovah serve, and let your joy converse
With trembling; kiss the Son, lest he appear
In anger, and ye perish in the way,
If once his wrath take fire like fuel sere.
Happy all those who have in him their stay

PSALM III.

AUGUST 9, 1653.

When he fled from Absalom.

LORD, how many are my foes!
How many those
That in arms against me rise!
Many are they
That of my life distrustfully thus say,
No help for him in God there lies.
But thou, Lord, art my shield, my glory,
Thee through my story
The exalter of my head I count;
Aloud I cried
Unto Jehovah, he full soon replied,
And heard me from his holy mount.

I lay and slept, I waked again;
For my sustain
Was the Lord. Of many millions
The populous rout
I fear not, though encamping round about
They pitch against me their pavilions.
Rise, Lord, save me, my God, for thou
Hast smote ere now
On the cheek-bone all my foes,
Of men abhorred
Hast broke the teeth. This help was from the Lord;
Thy blessing on thy people flows.

PSALM IV.

AUGUST 10, 1653.

ANSWER me when I call,
God of my righteousness,
In straits and in distress
Thou didst me disenthral
And set at large; now spare,
Now pity me, and hear my earnest prayer

Great ones, how long will ye
My glory have in scorn,
How long be thus forborne
Still to love vanity,
To love, to seek, to prize
Things false and vain, and nothing else but lies?

Yet know the Lord hath chose,
Chose to himself apart,
The good and meek of heart
(For whom to choose he knows);
Jehovah from on high
Will hear my voice what time to him I cry.

Be awed, and do not sin,
Speak to your hearts alone,
Upon your beds, each one,
And be at peace within.
Offer the offerings just
Of righteousness, and in Jehovah trust.

Many there be that say,
Who yet will show us good?
Talking like this world's brood;
But, Lord, thus let me pray,
On us lift up the light.
Lift up the favour of thy countenance bright

Into my heart more joy
And gladness thou hast put,
That when a year of glut
Their stores doth over-cloy,
And from their plenteous grounds
With vast increase their corn and wine abounds.

In peace at once will I
Both lay me down and sleep,
For thou alone dost keep
Me safe where'er I lie:
As in a rocky cell
Thou, Lord, alone in safety mak'st me dwell.

PSALM V.

AUGUST 12, 1653.

JEHOVAH, to my words give ear,
My meditation weigh;
The voice of my complaining hear,
My King and God; for unto thee I pray.
Jehovah, thou my early voice
Shalt in the morning hear,
I' the morning I to thee with choice
Will rank my prayers, and watch till thou appear.
For thou art not a God that takes
In wickedness delight,
Evil with thee no biding makes,
Fools or mad men stand not within thy sight.
All workers of iniquity
Thou hat'st; and them unblest
Thou wilt destroy that speak a lie;
The bloody and guileful man God doth detest.
But I will in thy mercies dear,
Thy numerous mercies, go

Into thy house; I in thy fear
Will towards thy holy temple worship low.
Lord, lead me in thy righteousness,
Lead me because of those
That do observe if I transgress;
Set thy ways right before, where my step goes.
For in his faltering mouth unstable
No word is firm or sooth;
Their inside, troubles miserable;
An open grave their throat, their tongue they smooth,
God, find them guilty, let them fall
By their own counsels quelled;
Push them in their rebellions all
Still on; for against thee they have rebelled.
Then all who trust in thee shall bring
Their joy; while thou from blame
Defend'st them, they shall ever sing
And shall triumph in thee, who love thy name.
For thou, Jehovah, wilt be found
To bless the just man still;
As with a shield thou wilt surround
Him with thy lasting favour and good will

PSALM VI.

AUGUST 13, 1653.

LORD, in thine anger do not reprehend me,
Nor in thy hot displeasure me correct;
Pity me, Lord, for I am much deject,
Am very weak and faint; heal and amend me:
For all my bones, that even with anguish ache,
Are troubled, yea my soul is troubled sore,
And thou, O Lord, how long? turn, Lord, restore
My soul; oh, save me for thy goodness sake:
For in death no remembrance is of thee;
Who in the grave can celebrate thy praise?
Wearied I am with sighing out my days,
Nightly my couch I make a kind of sea;
My bed I water with my tears; mine eye
Through grief consumes, is waxen old and dark
I' the midst of all mine enemies that mark.
Depart all ye that work iniquity,

Depart from me; for the voice of my weeping
The Lord hath heard, the Lord hath heard my prayer,
My supplication with acceptance fair
The Lord will own, and have me in his keeping.
Mine enemies shall all be blank and dashed
With much confusion; then grown red with shame,
They shall return in haste the way they came,
And in a moment shall be quite abashed.

PSALM VII.

AUGUST 14, 1653.

Upon the words of Chush the Benjamite against him.

LORD, my God, to thee I fly;
Save me and secure me under
Thy protection while I cry,
Lest as a lion (and no wonder)
He haste to tear my soul asunder,
Tearing and no rescue nigh.

Lord, my God, if I have thought
Or done this; if wickedness
Be in my hands, if I have wrought
Ill to him that meant me peace,
Or to him have rendered less,
And not freed my foe for nought;

Let the enemy pursue my soul
And overtake it; let him tread
My life down to the earth, and roll
In the dust my glory dead,
In the dust; and, there outspread,
Lodge it with dishonour foul.

Rise, Jehovah, in thine ire,
Rouse thyself amidst the rage
Of my foes that urge like fire;
And wake for me, their fury assuage;
Judgment here thou didst engage
And command, which I desire.

So the assemblies of each nation
Will surround thee, seeking right,

Thence to thy glorious habitation
Return on high, and in their sight.
Jehovah judgeth most upright
All people from the world's foundation

Judge me, Lord, be judge in this
According to my righteousness,
And the innocence which is
Upon me: cause at length to cease
Of evil men the wickedness
And their power that do amiss.

But the just establish fast,
Since thou art the just God that tries
Hearts and reins. On God is cast
My defence, and in him lies,
In him who both just and wise
Saves the upright of heart at last,

God is a just judge and severe,
And God is every day offended;
If the unjust will not forbear,
His sword he whets, his bow hath bended
Already, and for him intended
The tools of death, that waits him near

(His arrows purposely made he
For them that persecute.) Behold
He travels big with vanity,
Trouble he hath conceived of old
As in a womb, and from that mould
Hath at length brought forth a lie.

He digged a pit, and delved it deep,
And fell into the pit he made;
His mischief that due course doth keep,
Turns on his head, and his ill trade
Of violence will, undelayed,
Fall on his crown with ruin steep.

Then will I Jehovah's praise
According to his justice raise,
And sing the Name and Deity
Of Jehovah the most high.

PSALM VIII.

AUGUST 14, 1653.

O JEHOVAH our Lord, how wondrous great
And glorious is thy name through all the earth!
So as above the heavens thy praise to set
Out of the tender mouths of latest birth.

Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou
Hast founded strength because of all thy foes,
To stint the enemy, and slack the avenger's brow,
That bends his rage thy providence to oppose.

When I behold thy heavens, thy fingers' art,
The moon and stars which thou so bright hast set
In the pure firmament, then saith my heart,
Oh, what is man that thou rememberest yet,

And think'st upon him; or of man begot,
That him thou visit'st, and of him art found?
Scarce to be less than gods, thou mad'st his lot,
With honour and with state thou hast him crowned.

O'er the works of thy hand thou mad'st him lord,
Thou hast put all under his lordly feet,
All flocks, and herds, by thy commanding word,
All beasts that in the field or forest meet,

Fowl of the heavens, and fish that through the wet
Sea paths in shoals do slide, and know no dearth.
O Jehovah our Lord, how wondrous great
And glorious is thy name through all the earth!

APRIL, 1648. J. M.

[Nine of the Psalms done into metre, wherein all, but what is in a different character, are the very words of the text, translated from the original.]

PSALM LXXX.

1 THOU Shepherd that dost Israel *keep*,
Give ear *in time of need*,
Who leadest like a flock of sheep
Thy loved Joseph's seed,

That sitt'st between the cherubs *bright*,
Between their wings out-spread,
Shine forth, *and from thy cloud give light*,
And on our foes thy dread.

2 In Ephraim's view and Benjamin's,
And in Manasse's sight,
Awake [1]thy strength, come, and *be seen*
To save us *by thy might.*

3 Turn us again, *thy grace divine*
To us, O God, *vouchsafe;*
Cause thou thy face on us to shine,
And then we shall be safe.

4 Lord God of Hosts, how long wilt thou,
How long wilt thou declare
Thy [2]smoking wrath, *and angry brow*
Against thy people's prayer!

5 Thou feed'st them with the bread of tears,
Their bread with tears they eat,
And mak'st them [3]largely drink the tears
Wherewith their cheeks are wet.

6 A strife thou mak'st us *and a prey*
To every neighbour foe,
Amongst themselves they [4]laugh, they [4]play
And [4]flouts at us they throw.

7 Return us, *and thy grace divine*,
O God of Hosts, *vouchsafe*,
Cause thou thy face on us to shine,
And then we shall be safe.

8 A vine from Egypt thou hast brought,
Thy free love made it thine,
And drov'st out nations, *proud and haut*,
To plant this *lovely* vine.

9 Thou didst prepare for it a place,
And root it deep and fast,
That it *began to grow apace*,
And filled the land *at last.*

10 With her *green* shade that covered *all*,
The hills were *overspread*,
Her boughs as *high as* cedars tall
Advanced their lofty head.

[1] Gnorera. [2] Gnashaṅta. [3] Shalish.
[4] Jalgnagu.

11 Her branches *on the western side*
Down to the sea she sent,
And *upward* to that river *wide*
Her other branches *went.*
12 Why hast thou laid her hedges low,
And broken down her fence,
That all may pluck her, as they go,
With rudest violence?
13 The *tuskéd* boar out of the wood
Upturns it by the roots,
Wild beasts there browse, and make their food
Her grapes and tender shoots.
14 Return now, God of Hosts, look down
From Heaven, thy seat divine,
Behold *us, but without a frown,*
And visit this *thy* vine.
15 Visit this vine, which thy right hand
Hath set, and planted *long,*
And the young branch, that for thyself
Thou hast made firm and strong.
16 But now it is consumed with fire,
And cut *with axes* down;
They perish at thy dreadful ire,
At thy rebuke and frown.
17 Upon the man of thy right hand
Let thy *good* hand be *laid,*
Upon the son of man, whom thou
Strong for thyself hast made.
18 So shall we not go back from thee
To ways of sin and shame;
Quicken us thou, then *gladly* we
Shall call upon thy Name.
19 Return us, *and thy grace divine,*
Lord God of Hosts, *vouchsafe,*
Cause thou thy face on us to shine,
And then we shall be safe.

PSALM LXXXI.

1 To God our strength sing loud, *and clear,*
Sing loud to God *our King,*
To Jacob's God, *that all may hear,*
Loud acclamations ring

2 Prepare a hymn, prepare a song,
The timbrel hither bring,
The *cheerful* psaltery bring along,
And harp *with* pleasant *string.*
3 Blow, *as is wont*, in the new moon
With trumpets' *lofty sound*,
The appointed time, the day whereon
Our solemn feast *comes round.*
4 This was a statute *given of old*
For Israel *to observe*,
A law of Jacob's God, *to hold*,
From whence they might not swerve
5 This he a testimony ordained
In Joseph, *not to change*,
When as he passed through Egypt land:
The tongue I heard was strange.
6 From burden, *and from slavish toil*
I set his shoulder free:
His hands from pots, *and miry soil*,
Delivered were *by me.*
7 When trouble did thee sore assail,
On me then didst thou call,
And I to free thee *did not fail*,
And led thee out of thrall.
I answered thee in [1]thunder deep
With clouds encompassed round
I tried thee at the water *steep*
Of Meribah *renowned.*
8 Hear, O my people, *hearken well*,
I testify to thee,
Thou ancient stock of Israel,
If thou wilt list to me,
9 Throughout the land of thy abode
No alien god shall be,
Nor shalt thou to a foreign god
In honour bend thy knee.
10 I am the Lord thy God, which brought
Thee out of Egypt land;
Ask large enough, and I, *besought*,
Will grant thy full demand.

[1] Be sether ragnam.

11 And yet my people would not *hear*,
Nor hearken to my voice;
And Israel, *whom I loved so dear*,
Misliked me for his choice.
12 Then did I leave them to their will,
And to their wandering mind;
Their own conceits they followed still,
Their own devices blind.
13 Oh, that my people would *be wise*,
To serve me *all their days!*
And oh, that Israel would *advise*
To walk my *righteous* ways!
14 Then would I soon bring down their foes,
That now so proudly rise,
And turn my hand against *all those*
That are their enemies.
15 Who hate the Lord should *then be fain*
To bow to him and bend;
But *they, his people, should remain*,
Their time should have no end.
16 And he would feed them *from the shock*
With flour of finest wheat,
And satisfy them from the rock
With honey *for their meat.*

PSALM LXXXII.

1 God in the [1]great[1] assembly stands
Of kings and lordly states,
[2]Among the gods,[2] on both his hands
He judges and debates.
2 How long will ye [3]pervert the right
With[3] judgment false and wrong,
Favouring the wicked *by your might*,
Who thence grow bold and strong?
3 [4]Regard the[4] weak and fatherless,
[4]Despatch the[4] poor man's cause,
And [5]raise the man in deep distress
By[5] just and equal laws;

[1] Bagnadath-el. [2] Bekĕrev. [3] Tishphetu gnavel
[4] Shiphtu-dal. [5] Hatzdiku.

4 Defend the poor and desolate,
And rescue from the hands
Of wicked men the low estate
Of him *that help demands*.
5 They know not, nor will understand,
In darkness they walk on;
The earth's foundations all are [1]moved,
And[1] out of order gone
6 I said that ye were gods, yea all
The sons of God Most High;
7 But ye shall die like men, and fall
As other princes *die*.
8 Rise, God, [2]judge thou the earth *in might*,
This *wicked*[2] earth redress,
For thou art he who shalt by right
The nations all possess.

PSALM LXXXIII.

1 Be not thou silent *now at length*,
O God, hold not thy peace;
Sit thou not still, O God of *strength*,
We cry, and do not cease.
2 For lo, thy *furious* foes *now* [3]swell,
And[3] storm outrageously;
And they that hate thee, *proud and fell*,
Exalt their heads full high.
3 Against thy people they [4]contrive
[5]Their plots and counsels deep,
[6]Them to ensnare they chiefly strive,
[7]Whom thou dost hide and keep.
4 Come, let us cut them off, say they,
Till they no nation be;
That Israel's name for ever may
Be lost in memory.
5 For they consult [8]with all their might
And all as one in mind
Themselves against thee they unite,
And in firm union bind

[1] Jimmotu. [2] Shiphta [3] Jehemajun. [4] Jagnarimu.
[5] Sod. [6] Jirthjagnatsn gfal. [7] Tsephuneca.
[8] Lev jachdau.

6 The tents of Edom, and the brood
Of *scornful* Ishmael,
Moab, with them of Hagar's blood,
That in the desert dwell,
7 Gebal and Ammon *there conspire,*
And *hateful* Amalec,
The Philistims, and they of Tyre,
Whose bounds the sea doth check.
8 With them *great* Ashur also bands
And doth confirm the knot:
All these have lent their armed hands
To aid the sons of Lot.
9 Do to them as to Midian *bold,*
That wasted all the coast,
To Sisera, and as *is told*
Thou didst to Jabin's *host,*
When at the brook of Kishon *old*
They were repulsed and slain,
10 At Endor quite cut off, and rolled
As dung upon the plain.
11 As Zeb and Oreb evil sped,
So let their princes *speed,*
As Zeba and Zalmunna *bled,*
So let their princes *bleed*
12 *For they amidst their pride* have said,
By right now shall we seize
God's houses, *and will now invade*
[1]Their stately palaces.
13 My God, oh make them as a wheel,
No quiet let them find;
Giddy and *restless* let *them reel*
Like stubble from the wind.
14 As *when* an *aged* wood takes fire
Which on a sudden strays,
The *greedy* flame runs higher and higher
Till all the mountains blaze,
15 So with thy whirlwind them pursue,
And with thy tempest chase;
16 [1]And till they[2] yield thee honour due,
Lord, fill with shame their face.

[1] Neuth Elohim bears both. [2] Heb. They seek thy name.

17 Ashamed, and troubled, let them be,
Troubled and shamed for ever,
Ever confounded, and so die
With shame, *and 'scape it never.*
18 Then shall they know that thou, whose name
Jehovah is alone,
Art the most high, *and thou the same*
O'er all the earth *art one*

PSALM LXXXIV.

1 How lovely are thy dwellings fair
O Lord of Hosts, how dear
The *pleasant* tabernacles are,
Where thou dost dwell so near!
2 My soul doth long and almost die
Thy courts, O Lord, to see,
My heart and flesh aloud do cry,
O living God, for thee.
3 There even the sparrow *freed from wrong*
Hath found a house of *rest*,
The swallow there, to lay her young
Hath built her *brooding* nest;
Even by thy altars, Lord of Hosts,
They find their safe abode;
And home they fly from round the coasts,
Toward thee, my King, my God.
4 Happy, who in thy house reside,
Where thee they ever praise,
5 Happy, whose strength in thee doth bide,
And in their hearts thy ways.
6 They pass through Baca's *thirsty* vale,
That dry and barren ground,
As through a fruitful watery dale
Where springs and showers abound.
7 They journey on from strength to strength
With joy and gladsome cheer,
Till all before *our* God *at length*
In Sion do appear.
8 Lord God of Hosts, hear *now* my prayer,
O Jacob's God give ear;
9 Thou God, our shield, look on the face
Of thy anointed *dear.*

10 For one day in thy courts *to be*
Is better, *and more blest*,
Than *in the joys of vanity*
A thousand days *at best*.
I in the temple of my God
Had rather keep a door,
Than dwell in tents, *and rich abode*,
With sin for evermore.
11 For God the Lord, both sun and shield,
Gives grace and glory *bright;*
No good from them shall be withheld
Whose ways are just and right.
12 Lord *God* of Hosts *that reign'st on high*,
That man is *truly* blest,
Who *only* on thee doth rely,
And in thee only rest.

PSALM LXXXV.

1 Thy land to favour graciously
Thou hast not, Lord, been slack,
Thou hast from *hard* captivity
Returned Jacob back.
2 The iniquity thou didst forgive
That wrought thy people woe;
And all their sin, *that did thee grieve*,
Hast hid *where none shall know.*
3 Thine anger all thou hadst removed,
And *calmly* didst return
From thy [1] fierce wrath which we had proved
Far worse than fire to burn.
4 God of our saving health and peace,
Turn us, and us restore;
Thine indignation cause to cease
Toward us, *and chide no more.*
5 Wilt thou be angry without end,
For ever angry thus?
Wilt thou thy frowning ire extend
From age to age on us?

[1] Heb. The burning heat of thy wrath.

6 Wilt thou not [1] turn, and *hear our voice,*
And us again [1] revive;
That so thy people may rejoice
By thee preserved alive.
7 Cause us to see thy goodness, Lord,
To us thy mercy shew;
Thy saving health to us afford,
And life in us renew.
8 *And now* what God the Lord will speak,
I will *go straight and* hear;
For to his people he speaks peace,
And to his saints *full dear,*
To his dear saints he will speak peace,
But let them never more
Return to folly, *but surcease*
To trespass as before.
9 Surely to such as do him fear
Salvation is at hand;
And glory shall *ere long appear*
To dwell within our land.
10 Mercy and Truth *that long were missed*
Now *joyfully* are met;
Sweet Peace and Righteousness have kissed,
And hand in hand are set.
11 Truth from the earth, *like to a flower,*
Shall bud and blossom *then;*
And Justice from her heavenly bower
Look down *on mortal men.*
12 The Lord will also then bestow
Whatever thing is good;
Our land shall forth in plenty throw
Her fruits *to be our food.*
13 Before him Righteousness shall go,
His royal harbinger:
Then [2] will he come, and not be slow,
His footsteps cannot err.

[1] Heb. Turn to quicken us.
[2] Heb. He will set his steps to the way.

PSALM LXXXVI.

1 THY *gracious* ear, O Lord, incline,
O hear me, *I thee pray*,
For I am poor, and almost pine
With need, *and sad decay*.
2 Preserve my soul, for [1] I have trod
Thy ways, and love the just;
Save thou thy servant, O my God,
Who *still* in thee doth trust.
3 Pity me, Lord, for daily thee
I call; 4. Oh, make rejoice
Thy servant's soul; for, Lord, to thee
I lift my soul *and voice*.
5 For thou art good, thou, Lord, art prone
To pardon, thou to all
Art full of mercy, thou *alone*
To them that on thee call.
6 Unto my supplication, Lord,
Give ear, and to the cry
Of my *incessant* prayers afford
Thy hearing graciously.
7 I in the day of my distress
Will call on thee *for aid;*
For thou wilt *grant* me *free access*,
And answer *what I prayed*.
8 Like thee among the gods is none,
O Lord, nor any works
Of all that other gods have done
Like to thy *glorious* works.
9 The nations all whom thou hast made
Shall come, *and all shall frame*
To bow them low before thee, Lord,
And glorify thy name.
10 For great thou art, and wonders great
By thy strong hand are done,
Thou *in thy everlasting seat*
Remainest God alone.
11 Teach me, O Lord, thy way *most right*,
I in thy truth will bide,
To fear thy name my heart unite,
So shall it never slide.

[1] Heb. I am good, loving, a doer of good and holy things.

12 Thee will I praise, O Lord my God,
Thee honour and adore
With my whole heart, and blaze abroad
Thy name for evermore.
13 For great thy mercy is toward me,
And thou hast freed my soul,
Even from the lowest hell set free,
From deepest darkness foul.
14 O God! the proud against me rise,
And violent men are met
To seek my life, and in their eyes
No fear of thee have set.
15 But thou, Lord, art the God most mild,
Readiest thy grace to show,
Slow to be angry, and *art styled*
Most merciful, most true.
16 Oh, turn to me *thy face at length,*
And me have mercy on;
Unto thy servant give thy strength,
And save thy handmaid's son.
17 Some sign of good to me afford,
And let my foes *then* see,
And be ashamed; because thou, Lord,
Dost help and comfort me.

PSALM LXXXVII.

1 Among the holy mountains *high*
Is his foundation fast,
There seated is his sanctuary,
His temple there is placed.
2 Sion's *fair* gates the Lord loves more
Than all the dwellings *fair*
Of Jacob's *land, though there be store,*
And all within his care,
3 City of God, most glorious things
Of thee *abroad* are spoke;
4 I mention Egypt, *where proud kings*
Did our forefathers yoke;
I mention Babel to my friends,
Philistia *full of scorn,*
And Tyre with Ethiop's *utmost ends,*
Lo this man there was born:

5 But *twice that praise shall in our ear*
Be said of Sion *last;*
This and this man was born in her,
High God shall fix her fast.
6 The Lord shall write it in a scroll,
That ne'er shall be out-worn,
When he the nations doth enrol,
That this man there was born.
7 Both they who sing, and they who dance,
With sacred songs are there;
In thee *fresh brooks, and soft streams glance,*
And all my fountains *clear*

PSALM LXXXVIII.

1 Lord God, that dost me save and keep,
All day to thee I cry;
And all night long before thee *weep,*
Before thee *prostrate lie.*
2 Into thy presence let my prayer
With sighs devout ascend,
And to my cries that *ceaseless are,*
Thine ear with favour bend.
3 For cloyed with woes and trouble store
Surcharged my soul doth lie;
My life *at death's uncheerful door*
Unto the grave draws nigh.
Reckoned I am with them that pass
Down to the *dismal* pit;
I am a man,[1] but weak, alas!
And for that name unfit.
From life discharged and parted quite
Among the dead to *sleep;*
And like the slain *in bloody fight*
That in the grave lie *deep.*
Whom thou rememberest no more,
Dost never more regard;
Them from thy hand delivered o'er,
Death's hideous house hath barred.

[1] Heb. A man without manly strength.

6 Thou in the lowest pit *profound*
Hath set me *all forlorn*,
Where thickest darkness *hovers round*,
In horrid deeps *to mourn*.
7 Thy wrath, *from which no shelter saves*,
Full sore doth press on me;
Thou break'st upon me all thy waves,
And all thy waves break me.[1]
8 Thou dost my friends from me estrange,
And mak'st me odious.
Me to them odious, *for they change*,
And I here pent up thus.
9 Through sorrow, and affliction great,
Mine eye grows dim and dead;
Lord, all the day I thee entreat,
My hands to thee I spread.
10 Wilt thou do wonders on the dead?
Shall the deceased arise,
And praise thee *from their loathsome bed*
With pale and hollow eyes?
11 Shall they thy loving kindness tell
On whom the grave *hath hold*,
Or they who in perdition *dwell*,
Thy faithfulness *unfold?*
12 In darkness can thy mighty *hand*
Or wondrous acts be known?
Thy justice in the *gloomy* land
Of *dark* oblivion?
13 But I to thee, O Lord, do cry,
Ere yet my life be spent,
And *up to thee* my prayer *doth hie*,
Each morn, and thee prevent.
14 Why wilt thou, Lord, my soul forsake,
And hide thy face from me,
15 That am already bruised, and [2]shake
With terror sent from thee?[2]
Bruised and afflicted, and *so low*
As ready to expire;
While I thy terrors undergo,
Astonished with thine ire.
16 Thy fierce wrath over me doth flow,
Thy threatenings cut me through:

[1] The Hebrew bears both. [2] Præ concussione.

17 All day they round about me go,
Like waves they me pursue.
18 Lover and friend thou hast removed,
And severed from me far:
They *fly me now* whom I have loved,
And as in darkness are.

A PARAPHRASE ON PSALM CXIV.

[This and the following Psalm were done by the Author at fifteen years old.]

When the blest seed of Terah's faithful son,
After long toil, their liberty had won,
And past from Pharian fields to Canaan land,
Led by the strength of the Almighty's hand,
Jehovah's wonders were in Israel shown,
His praise and glory was in Israel known.
That saw the troubled sea, and shivering fled,
And sought to hide his froth-becurléd head
Low in the earth; Jordan's clear streams recoil,
As a faint host that hath received the foil.
The high, huge-bellied mountains skip like rams
Amongst their ewes, the little hills like lambs.
Why fled the ocean? And why skipped the mountains?
Why turned Jordan toward his crystal fountains?
Shake, Earth! and at the presence be aghast
Of him that ever was, and aye shall last;
That glassy floods from rugged rocks can crush,
And make soft rills from fiery flint-stones gush.

PSALM CXXXVI.

Let us, with a gladsome mind,
Praise the Lord, for he is kind:
For his mercies aye endure,
Ever faithful, ever sure.

Let us blaze his name abroad,
For of gods he is the God:
For his, &c.

Oh, let us his praises tell,
Who doth the wrathful tyrants quell:
For his, &c.

Who with his miracles doth make
Amazéd Heaven and earth to shake:
For his, &c.

Who by his wisdom did create
The painted heavens so full of state:
For his, &c

Who did the solid earth ordain
To rise above the watery plain.
For his, &c.

Who, by his all commanding might,
Did fill the new-made world with light
For his, &c.

And caused the golden-tresséd sun
All the day long his course to run:
For his, &c.

The hornéd moon to shine by night,
Amongst her spangled sisters bright
For his, &c.

He, with his thunder-clasping hand,
Smote the first-born of Egypt land:
For his, &c.

And in despite of Pharao fell,
He brought from thence his Israel.
For his, &c.

The ruddy waves he cleft in twain
Of the Erythræan main:
For his, &c.

The floods stood still like walls of glass,
While the Hebrew bands did pass:
For his, &c.

But full soon they did devour
The tawny king with all his power:
For his, &c.

His chosen people he did bless
In the wasteful wilderness:
For his, &c

In bloody battle he brought down
Kings of prowess and renown:
For his, &c.

He foiled bold Seon and his host,
That ruled the Amorrean coast:
For his, &c.

And large-limbed Og he did subdue,
With all his over-hardy crew:
For his, &c.

And to his servant Israel,
He gave their land therein to dwell:
For his, &c.

He hath, with a piteous eye,
Beheld us in our misery:
For his, &c.

And freed us from the slavery
Of the invading enemy:
For his, &c.

All living creatures he doth feed,
And with full hand supplies their need:
For his, &c.

Let us therefore warble forth
His mighty majesty and worth:
For his, &c.

That his mansion hath on high
Above the reach of mortal eye
For his mercies aye endure.
Ever faithful, ever sure.

JOHANNIS MILTONI

LONDINENSIS

Poemata.

QUORUM PLERAQUE INTRA ANNUM ÆTATIS VIGESIMUM CONSCRIPSIT.

Hæc quæ sequuntur de Authore testimonia, tametsi ipse intelligebat non tam de se quam supra se esse dicta, eo quod præclaro ingenio viri, nec non amici ita ferè solent laudare, ut omnia suis potius virtutibus, quam veritati congruentia nimis cupidè affingant, noluit tamen horum egregiam in se voluntatem non esse notam; cum alii præsertim ut id faceret magnopere suaderent. Dum enim nimiæ laudis invidiam totis ab se viribus amolitur, sibique quod plus æquo est non attributum esse mavult, judicium interim hominum cordatorum atque illustrium quin summo sibi honori ducat, negare non potest.

JOANNES BAPTISTA MANSUS, MARCHIO VILLENSIS. NEAPOLITANUS,

AD

JOANNEM MILTONIUM ANGLUM.

Ut mens, forma, decor, facies, mos, si pietas sic,
Non Anglus, verùm hercle Angelus ipse fores.

AD JOANNEM MILTONEM ANGLUM

TRIPLICI POESEOS LAUREA CORONANDUM,

Græca nimirum, Latina, atque Hetrusca, Epigramma Joan. Salsilli Romani.

Cede Meles, cedat depressa Mincius urna;
Sebetus Tassum desinat usque loqui;
At Thamesis victor cunctis ferat altior undas,
Nam per te, Milto, par tribus unus erit.

AD JOANNEM MILTONUM.

Græcia Mæonidem, jactet sibi Roma Maronem,
Anglia Miltonum jactat utrique parem.

SELVAGGI.

AL SIGNIOR GIO. MILTONI NOBILE INGLESE.

Ode.

Ergimi all' Etra ò Clio
Perche di stelle intrecciero corona,
Non più del biondo Dio
La fronde eterna in Pindo, e in Elicona,
Diensi a merto maggior, maggiori i fregi,
A' celeste virtù celesti pregi.

Non puo del tempo edace
Rimaner preda, eterno alto valore,
Non puo l' oblio rapace
Furar dalle memorie eccelso onore;
Su l' arco di mia cetra un dardo forte
Virtù m' adatti, e ferirò la morte.

Del Ocean profondo
Cinta dagli ampi gorghi Anglia resiede
Separata dal mondo,
Però che il suo valor l'umana eccede:
Questa seconda sà produrre Eroi,
Ch' hanno a ragion del sovruman tra noi.

Alla virtù sbandita
Danno ne i petti lor fido ricetto,
Quella gli è sol gradita,
Perche in lei san trovar gioia e diletto;
Ridillo tu, Giovanni, e mostra in tanto
Con tua vera virtù, vero il mio canto.

Lungi dal patrio lido
Spinse Zeusi l' industre ardente brama;
Ch' udio d' Helena il grido
Con aurea tromba rimbombar la fama,
E per poterla effigiare al paro
Dalle più belle Idee trasse il più raro.

Cosi l' ape ingegnosa
Trae con industria il suo liquor pregiato

Dal giglio e dalla rosa,
E quanti vaghi fiori ornano il prato;
Formano un dolce suon diverse chorde,
Fan varie voci melodia concorde.

Di bella gloria amante
Milton dal Ciel natio per varie parti
Le peregrine piante
Volgesti a ricercar scienze, ed arti;
Del Gallo regnator vedesti i regni,
E dell' Italia ancor gl' Eroi più degni

Fabro quasi divino
Sol virtù rintracciando il tuo pensiero
Vide in ogni confino
Chi di nobil valor calca il sentiero;
L' ottimo dal miglior dopo scegliea
Per fabbricar d'ogni virtu l' idea.

Quanti nacquero in Flora
O in lei del parlar Tosco appreser l' arte,
La cui memoria onora
Il mondo fatta eterna in dotte carte.
Volesti ricercar per tuo tesoro,
E parlasti con lor nell' opre loro

Nell' altera Babelle
Per te il parlar confuse Giove in vano,
Che per varie favelle
Di se stessa trofeo cadde su 'l piano:
Ch' ode oltr' all' Anglia il suo più degno idioma
Spagna, Francia, Toscana, e Grecia, e Roma.

I più profondi arcani
Ch' occulta la natura e in cielo e in terra
Ch' à ingegni sovrumani
Troppo avara tal' hor gli chiude, e serra,
Chiaramente conosci, e giungi al fine
Della moral virtude al gran confine.

Non batta il Tempo l' ale,
Fermisi immoto, e in un fermin si gl' anni,
Che di virtù immortale
Scorron di troppo ingiuriosi a i danni;
Che s' opre degne di poema o storia
Furon giapl' hai presenti alla memoria.

Dammi tua dolce cetra
Se vuoi ch' io dica del tuo dolce canto,
Ch' inalzandoti all' Etra
Di farti huomo celeste ottiene il vanto,
Il Tamigi il dirà che gl' e concesso
Per te, suo cigno, parreggiar Permesso

I o che in riva del Arno
Tento spiegar tuo merto alto e preclaro,
So che fatico indarno,
E ad ammirar, non a lodarlo imparo;
Freno dunque la lingua, e ascolto il core
Che ti prende a lodar con lo stupore.

Del sig. ANTONIO FRANCINI,
Gentilhuomo Fiorentino.

JOANNI MILTONI

LONDINENSI:

Juveni patria, virtutibus, eximio,

VIRO qui multa peregrinatione, studio cuncta orbis terrarum loca perspexit, ut novus Ulysses omnia ubique ab omnibus apprehenderet:

Polyglotto, in cujus ore linguæ jam deperditæ sic reviviscunt, ut idiomata omnia sint in ejus laudibus infacunda; et jure ea percallet, ut admirationes et plausus populorum ab propriâ sapientiâ excitatos intelligat:

Illi, cujus animi dotes corporisque sensus ad admirationem commovent, et per ipsam motum cuique auferunt; cujus opera ad plausus hortantur, sed venustate[1] vocem laudatoribus adimunt.

Cui in memoriâ totus orbis; in intellectu sapientia; in voluntate ardor gloriæ; in ore eloquentia; harmonicos cœlestium sphærarum sonitus astronomiâ duce audienti; characteres mirabilium naturæ per quos Dei magnitudo describitur magistrâ philosophiâ legenti; antiquitatum latebras, vetustatis excidia, eruditionis ambages, comite assidu à auctorum lectione,

"Exquirenti, restauranti, percurrenti.
At cur nitor in arduum?"

[1] Vastitate, Edit. 1645.

Illi in cujus virtutibus evulgandis ora Famæ non sufficiant, nec hominum stupor in laudandis satis est, reverentiæ et amoris ergo hoc ejus meritis debitum admirationis tributum offert Carolus Datus. Patricius Florentinus,

Tanto homini servus, tantæ virtutis amator

Elegiarum Liber Primus.

ELEGIA PRIMA

Ad Carolum Deodatum.

Tandem, chare, tuæ mihi pervenere tabellæ;
Pertulit et voces nuncia charta tuas;
Pertulit, occiduâ Devæ Cestrensis ab orâ
Vergivium prono qua petit amne salum.
Multum, crede, juvat terras aluisse remotas
Pectus amans nostri, tamque fidele caput,
Quodque mihi lepidum tellus longinqua sodalem
Debet, at unde brevi reddere jussa velit.
Me tenet urbs refluâ quam Thamesis alluit undâ,
Meque nec invitum patria dulcis habet.
Jam nec arundiferum mihi cura revisere Camum,
Nec dudum vetiti me laris angit amor.
Nuda nec arva placent, umbrasque negantia molles;
Quàm male Phœbicolis convenit ille locus!
Nec duri libet usque minas perferre magistri,
Cæteraque ingenio non subeunda meo.
Si sit hoc exilium patrios adiisse penates,
Et vacuum curis otia grata sequi,
Non ego vel profugi nomen, sortemve recuso,
Lætus et exilii conditione fruor.
O utinam vates nunquam graviora tulisset
Ille Tomitano flebilis exul agro;
Non tunc Ionio quicquam cessisset Homero,
Neve foret victo laus tibi prima Maro.
Tempora nam licet hic placidis dare libera Musis,
Et totum rapiunt me mea vita libri.

Excipit hinc fessum sinuosi pompa theatri,
Et vocat ad plausus garrula scena suos.
Seu catus auditur senior, seu prodigus hæres,
Seu procus, aut positâ casside miles adest,
Sive decennali fœcundus lite patronus
Detonat inculto barbara verba foro:
Sæpe vafer gnato succurrit servus amanti,
Et nasum rigidi fallit ubique patris;
Sæpe novos illic virgo mirata calores
Quid sit amor nescit, dum quoque nescit, amat.
Sive cruentatum furiosa Tragœdia sceptrum
Quassat, et effusis crinibus ora rotat,
Et dolet, et specto, juvat et spectasse dolendo,
Interdum et lacrymis dulcis amaror inest:
Seu puer infelix indelibata reliquit
Gaudia, et abrupto flendus amore cadit;
Seu ferus è tenebris iterat Styga criminis ultor,
Conscia funereo pectora torre movens;
Seu mœret Pelopeia domus, seu nobilis Ili,
Aut luit incestos aula Creontis avos.
Sed neque sub tecto semper nec in urbe latemus,
Irrita nec nobis tempora veris eunt.
Nos quoque lucus habet vicinâ consitus ulmo,
Atque suburbani nobilis umbra loci.
Sæpius hic blandas spirantia sidera flammas,
Virgineos videas præteriisse choros.
Ah quoties dignæ stupui miracula formæ,
Quæ possit senium vel reparare Jovis!
Ah quoties vidi superantia lumina gemmas,
Atque faces, quotquot volvit uterque polus;
Collaque bis vivi Pelopis quæ brachia vincant,
Quæque fluit puro nectare tincta via;
Et decus eximium frontis, tremulosque capillos,
Aurea quæ fallax retia tendit amor;
Pellacesque genas, ad quos hyacinthina sordet
Purpura, et ipse tui floris, Adoni, rubor!
Cedite laudatæ toties Heroides olim,
Et quæcunque vagum cepit amica Jovem:
Cedite Achæmeniæ turritâ fronte puellæ,
Et quot Susa colunt, Memnoniamque Ninon.
Vos etiam Danaæ fasces submittite Nymphæ,
Et vos Iliacæ, Romuleæque nurus.
Nec Pompeianas Tarpëia Musa columnas
Jactet, et Ausoniis plena theatra stolis.

Gloria virginibus debetur prima Britannis,
Extera sat tibi sit fœmina posse sequi.
Tuque urbs Dardaniis, Londinum, structa colonis,
Turrigerum latè conspicienda caput,
Tu nimium felix intra tua mœnia claudis
Quicquid formosi pendulus orbis habet.
Non tibi tot cœlo scintillant astra sereno,
Endymioneæ turba ministra deæ,
Quot tibi, conspicuæ formâque auroque puellæ
Per medias radiant turba videnda vias.
Creditur huc geminis venisse invecta columbis
Alma pharetrigero milite cincta Venus,
Huic Cnidon, et riguas Simoentis flumine valles,
Huic Paphon, et roseam post habitura Cypron.
Ast ego, dum pueri sinit indulgentia cæci,
Mœnia quàm subitò linquere fausta paro;
Et vitare procul malefidæ infamia Circes
Atria, divini Molyos usus ope.
Stat quoque juncosas Cami remeare paludes,
Atque iterum raucæ murmur adire scholæ.
Interea fidi parvum cape munus amici,
Paucaque in alternos verba coacta modos.

ELEGIA SECUNDA.

Anno Ætatis 17.

In obitum Præconis Academici Cantabrigiensis.

Te, qui conspicuus baculo fulgente solebas
Palladium toties ore ciere gregem,
Ultima præconum præconem te quoque sæva
Mors rapit, officio nec favet ipsa suo.
Candidiora licet fuerint tibi tempora plumis
Sub quibus accipimus delituisse Jovem;
O dignus tamen Hæmonio juvenescere succo,
Dignus in Æsonios vivere posse dies,
Dignus quem Stygiis medicâ revocaret ab undis
Arte Coronides, sæpe rogante deâ.
Tu si jussus eras acies accire togatas,
Et celer à Phœbo nuntius ire tuo,
Talis in Iliacâ stabat Cyllenius aulâ
Alipes, æthereâ missus ab arce Patris

Talis et Eurybates ante ora furentis Achillei
Rettulit Atridæ jussa severa ducis.
Magna sepulchrorum regina, satelles Averni,
Sæva nimis Musis, Palladi sæva nimis,
Quin illos rapias qui pondus inutile terræ,
Turba quidem est telis ista petenda tuis.
Vestibus hunc igitur pullis Academia luge,
Et madeant lachrymis nigra feretra tuis.
Fundat et ipsa modos querebunda Elegeïa tristes,
Personet et totis mœnia mœsta scholis.

ELEGIA TERTIA,

Anno Ætatis 17.

In obitum Præsulis Wintoniensis.[1]

Mœstus eram, et tacitus nullo comitante sedebam,
Hærebantque animo tristia plura meo,
Protinus en subiit funestæ cladis imago
Fecit in Angliaco quam Libitina solo;
Dum procerum ingressa est splendentes marmore turres,
Dira sepulchrali mors metuenda face;
Pulsavitque auro gravidos et jaspide muros,
Nec metuit satrapum sternere falce greges.
Tunc memini clarique ducis, fratisque verendi
Intempestivis ossa cremata rogis:
Et memini Heroum quos vidit ad æthera raptos,
Flevit et amissos Belgia tota duces:
At te præcipuè luxi, dignissime Præsul,
Wintoniæque olim gloria magna tuæ;
Delicui fletu, et tristi sic ore querebar,
Mors fera, Tartareo diva secunda Jovi,
Nonne satis quod sylva tuas persentiat iras,
Et quod in herbosos jus tibi detur agros,
Quodque affiata tuo marcescant lilia tabo,
Et crocus, et pulchræ Cypridi sacra rosa,
Nec sinis ut semper fluvio contermina quercus
Miretur lapsus prætereuntis aquæ?

[1] Lancelot Andrewes, who died Sept. 21, 1626.

Et tibi succumbit liquido quæ plurima cœlo
Evehitur pennis quamlibet augur avis,
Et quæ mille nigris errant animalia sylvis,
Et quod alunt mutum Proteos antra pecus.
Invida, tanta tibi cum sit concessa potestas;
Quid juvat humanâ tingere cæde manus?
Nobileque in pectus certas acuisse sagittas,
Semideamque animam sede fugâsse suâ?
Talia dum lacrymans alto sub pectore volvo,
Roscidus occiduis Hesperus exit aquis
Et Tartessiaco submerserat æquore currum
Phœbus, ab Eoö littore mensus iter.
Nec mora, membra cavo posui refovenda cubili,
Condiderant oculos noxque soporque meos:
Cum mihi visus eram lato spatiarier agro,
Heu nequit ingenium visa referre meum.
Illic puniceâ radiabant omnia luce,
Ut matutino cum juga sole rubent.
Ac veluti cum pandit opes Thaumantia prolès,
Vestitu nituit multicolore solum.
Non dea tam variis ornavit floribus hortos
Alcinoi, Zephyro Chloris amata levi.
Flumina vernantes lambunt argentea campos,
Ditior Hesperior flavet arena Tago.
Serpit odoriferas per opes levis aura Favonî,
Aura sub innumeris humida nata rosis,
Talis in extremis terræ Gangetidis oris
Luciferi regis fingitur esse domus.
Ipse racemiferis dum densas vitibus umbras,
Et pellucentes miror ubique locos,
Ecce mihi subito Præsul Wintonius astat,
Sidereum nitido fulsit in ore jubar;
Vestis ad auratos defluxit candida talos,
Infula divinum cinxerat alba caput.
Dumque senex tali incedit venerandus amictu,
Intremuit læto florea terra sono.
Agmina gemmatis plaudunt cœlestia pennis,
Pura triumphali personat æthra tubâ.
Quisque novum amplexu comitem cantuque salutat,
Hosque aliquis placido misit ab ore sonos;
Nate veni, et patrii felix cape gaudia regni,
Semper ab hinc duro, nate, labore vaca.
Dixit, ex aligeræ tetigerunt nablia turmæ,
At mihi cum tenebris aurea pulsa quies

Flebam turbatos Cephaleiâ pellice somnos,
Talia contingant somnia sæpe mihi

ELEGIA QUARTA,

Anno Ætatis 18.

Ad Thomam Junium *præceptorem suum, apud mercatores Anglicos Hamburgæ agentes, Pastoris munere fungentem.*

Curre per immensum subitò mea littera pontum,
I, pete Teutonicos læve per æquor agros;
Segnes rumpe moras, et nil, precor, obstet eunti,
Et festinantis nil remoretur iter.
Ipse ego Sicanio frænantem carcere ventos
Æolon, et virides sollicitabo Deos,
Cæruleamque suis comitatam Dorida Nymphis,
Ut tibi dent placidam per sua regna viam.
At tu, si poteris, celeres tibi sume jugales,
Vecta quibus Colchis fugit ab ore viri;
Aut queis Triptolemus Scythicas devenit in oras
Gratus Eleusinâ missus ab urbe puer.
Atque ubi Germanas flavere videbis arenas,
Ditis ad Hamburgæ mœnia flecte gradum,
Dicitur occiso quæ ducere nomen ab Hamâ,
Cimbrica quem fertur clava dedisse neci.
Vivit ibi antiquæ clarus pietatis honore
Præsul, Christicolas pascere doctus oves;
Ille quidem est animæ plusquam pars altera nostræ;
Dimidio vitæ vivere cogor ego.
Hei mihi! quot pelagi, quot montes interjecti,
Me faciunt aliâ parte carere mei!
Charior ille mihi quàm tu doctissime Graium
Cliniadi, pronepos qui Telamonis erat;
Quàmque Stagirites generoso magnus alumno,
Quem peperit Lybico Chaonis alma Jovi.
Qualis Amyntorides, qualis Philyrëius heros
Myrmidonum regi, talis et ille mihi.
Primus ego Aonios illo præeunte recessus
Lustrabam, et bifidi sacra vireta jugi,
Pieriosque hausi latices, Clioque favente,
Castalio sparsi læta ter ora mero.

Flammeus at signum ter viderat arietis Æthon,
Induxitque auro lanea terga novo,
Bisque novo terram sparsisti, Chlori, senilem
Gramine, bisque tuas abstulit Auster opes:
Necdum ejus licuit mihi lumina pascere vultu,
Aut linguæ dulces aure bibisse sonos.
Vade igitur, cursuque Eurum præverte sonorum,
Quàm sit opus monitis res docet, ipsa vides.
Invenies dulci cum conjuge fortè sedentem,
Mulcentem gremio pignora chara suo,
Forsitan aut veterum prælarga volumina patrum
Versantem, aut veri biblia sacra Dei,
Cœlestive animas saturantem rore tenellas,
Grande salutiferæ religionis opus.
Utque solet, multam sit dicere cura salutem,
Dicere quam decuit, si modo adesset, herum
Hæc quoque, paulum oculos in humum defixa modestos,
Verba verecundo sis memor ore loqui:
Hæc tibi, si teneris vacat inter prælia Musis,
Mittit ab Angliaco littore fida manus.
Accipe sinceram, quamvis sit sera, salutem;
Fiat et hoc ipso gratior illa tibi.
Sera quidem, sed vera fuit, quam casta recepit
Icaris à lento Penelopeia viro.
Ast ego quid volui manifestum tollere crimen,
Ipse quod ex omni parte levare nequit?
Arguitur tardus meritò, noxamque fatetur,
Et pudet officium deseruisse suum.
Tu modò da veniam fasso, veniamque roganti,
Crimina diminui, quæ patuere, solent.
Non ferus in pavidos rictus diducit hiantes,
Vulnifico pronos nec rapit ungue leo.
Sæpe sarissiferi crudelia pectora Thracis
Supplicis ad mœstas delicuere preces.
Extensæque manus avertunt fulminis ictus,
Placat et iratos hostia parva Deos.
Jamque diu scripsisse tibi fuit impetus illi,
Neve moras ultra ducere passus Amor.
Nam vaga Fama refert, heu nuntia vera malorum!
In tibi finitimis bella tumere locis,
Teque tuamque urbem truculento milite cingi,
Et jam Saxonicos arma parasse duces.
Te circum latè campos populatur Enyo,
Et sata carne virûm jam cruor arvarrigat;

Germanisque suum concessit Thracia Martem,
Illuc Odrysios Mars pater egit equos;
Perpetuòque comans jam deflorescit oliva,
Fugit et ærisonam Divi perosa tubam,
Fugit Io terris, et jam non ultima virgo
Creditur ad superas justa vclasse domos.
Te tamen interea belli circumsonat horror,
Vivis et ignoto solus inopsque solo;
Et, tibi quam patrii non exhibuere penates,
Sede peregrinâ quæris egenus opem.
Patria dura parens, et saxis sævior albis
Spumea quæ pulsat littoris unda tui,
Siccine te decet innocuos exponere fœtus.
Siccine in externam ferrea cogis humum,
Et sinis ut terris quærant alimenta remotis
Quos tibi prospiciens miserat ipse Deus,
Et qui læta ferunt de cœlo nuntia, quique,
Quæ via post cineres ducat ad astra, docent?
Digna quidem Stygiis quæ vivas clausa tenebris,
Æternâque animæ digna perire fame!
Haud aliter vates terræ Thesbitidis olim
Pressit inassueto devia tesqua pede,
Desertasque Arabum salebras, dum regis Achabi
Effugit atque tuas, Sidoni dira, manus.
Talis et horrisono laceratus membra flagello,
Paulus ab Æmathiâ pellitur urbe Cilix.
Piscosæque ipsum Gergessæ civis Iësum
Finibus ingratus jussit abire suis.
At tu sume animos, nec spes cadat anxia curis,
Nec tua concutiat decolor ossa metus.
Sis etenim quamvis fulgentibus obsitus armis,
Intententque tibi millia tela necem,
At nullis vel inerme latus violabitur armis,
Deque tuo cuspis nulla cruore bibet.
Namque eris ipse Dei radiante sub ægide tutus,
Ille tibi custos, et pugil ille tibi;
Ille Sionææ qui tot sub mœnibus arcis
Assyrios fudit nocte silente viros;
Inque fugam vertit quos in Samaritidas oras
Misit ab antiquis prisca Damascus agris,
Terruit et densas pavido cum rege cohortes,
Aere dum vacuo buccina clara sonat,
Cornea pulvereum dum verberat ungula campum,
Currus arenosam dum quatit actus humum,

Auditurque hinnitus equorum ad bella ruentûm,
Et strepitus ferri, murmuraque alta virûm.
Et tu (quod superest miseris) sperare memento,
Et tua magnanimo pectore vince mala;
Nec dubites quandoque frui melioribus annis,
Atque iterum patrios posse videre lares.

ELEGIA QUINTA.

Anno Ætatis 20.

In adventum veris.

In se perpetuo Tempus revolubile gyro
Jam revocat Zephyros vere tepente novos;
Induiturque brevem Tellus reparata juventam,
Jamque soluta gelu dulce virescit humus.
Fallor? an et nobis redeunt in carmina vires,
Ingeniumque mihi munere veris adest?
Munere veris adest, iterumque vigescit ab illo
(Quis putet?), atque aliquod jam sibi poscit opus
Castalis ante oculos, bifidumque cacumen oberrat,
Et mihi Pyrenen somnia nocte ferunt;
Concitaque arcano fervent mihi pectora motu,
Et furor, et sonitus me sacer intùs agit.
Delius ipse venit, video Penëide lauro
Implicitos crines, Delius ipse venit.
Jam mihi mens liquidi raptatur in ardua cœli,
Perque vagas nubes corpore liber eo;
Perque umbras, perque antra feror penetralia vatum,
Et mihi fana patent interiora Deûm;
Intuiturque animus toto quid agatur Olympo,
Nec fugiunt oculos Tartara cæca meos.
Quid tam grande sonat distento spiritus ore?
Quid parit hæc rabies, quid sacer iste furor?
Ver mihi, quod dedit ingenium, cantabitur illo,
Profuerint isto reddita dona modo.
Jam Philomela tuos foliis adoperta novellis
Instituis modulos, dum silet omne nemus:
Urbe ego, tu sylvâ, simul incipiamus utrique,
Et simul adventum veris uterque canat.

Veris Io! rediere vices, celebremus honores
Veris, et hoc subeat Musa perennis[1] opus.
Jam sol Æthiopas fugiens Tithoniaque arva,
Flectit ad Arctoas aurea lora plagas.
Est breve noctis iter, brevis est mora noctis opacæ.
Horrida cum tenebris exulat illa suis.
Jamque Lycaonius plaustrum cœleste Bootes
Non longâ sequitur fessus ut ante viâ;
Nunc etiam solitas circum Jovis atria toto
Excubias agitant sidera rara polo.
Nam dolus, et cædes, et vis cum nocte recessit,
Neve Giganteum Dii timuere scelus.
Forte aliquis scopuli recubans in vertice pastor,
Roscida cum primo sole rubescit humus,
Hac, ait, hac certè caruisti nocte puellâ,
Phœbe tuâ, celeres quæ retineret equos.
Læta suas repetit sylvas, pharetramque resumit
Cynthia, Luciferas ut videt alta rotas,
Et tenues ponens radios gaudere videtur
Officium fieri tam breve fratris ope.
Desere, Phœbus ait, thalamos Aurora seniles,
Quid juvat effœto procubuisse toro?
Te manet Æolides viridi venator in herba,
Surge, tuos ignes altus Hymettus habet.
Flava verecundo dea crimen in ore fatetur,
Et matutinos ocius urget equos.
Exuit invisam Tellus rediviva senectam,
Et cupit amplexus, Phœbe, subire tuos;
Et cupit, et digna est. Quid enim formosius illâ,
Pandit ut omniferos luxuriosa sinus,
Atque Arabum spirat messes, et ab ore venusto,
Mitia cum Paphiis fundit amoma rosis!
Ecce coronatur sacro frons ardua luco,
Cingit ut Idæam pinea turris Opim;
Et vario madidos intexit flore capillos,
Floribus et visa est posse placere suis.
Floribus effusos ut erat redimita capillos
Tenario placuit diva Sicana Deo.
Aspice, Phœbe, tibi faciles hortantur amores,
Mellitasque movent flamina verna preces.
Cinnameâ Zephyrus leve plaudit odorifer alâ,
Blanditiasque tibi ferre videntur aves,

[1] Quotannis. Edit. 1645.

Nec sine dote tuos temeraria quærit amores
Terra, nec optatos poscit egena toros,
Alma salutiferum medicos tibi gramen in usus
Præbet, et hinc titulos adjuvat ipsa tuos.
Quòd si te pretium, si te fulgentia tangunt
Munera (muneribus sæpe coëmptus Amor),
Illa tibi ostentat quascunque sub æquore vasto,
Et superinjectis montibus abdit opes.
Ah quoties, cum tu clivoso fessus Olympo
In vespertinas præcipitaris aquas,
Cur te, inquit, cursu languentem, Phœbe, diurno
Hesperiis recipit Cærula mater aquis?
Quid tibi cum Tethy? Quid cum Tartesside lymphâ,
Dia quid immundo perluis ora salo?
Frigora, Phœbe, meâ melius captabis in umbrâ,
Huc ades, ardentes imbue rore comas.
Mollior egelidâ veniet tibi somnus in herbâ,
Huc ades, et gremio lumina pone meo.
Quàque juces, circum mulcebit lene susurrans
Aura, per humentes corpora fusa rosas.
Nec me (crede mihi) terrent Semeleïa fata,
Nec Phaetonteo fumidus axis equo;
Cum tu, Phœbe, tuo sapientius uteris igni,
Huc ades, et gremio lumina pone meo.
Sic Tellus lasciva suos suspirat amores;
Matris in exemplum cætera turba ruunt.
Nunc etenim toto currit vagus orbe Cupido,
Languentesque fovet solis ab igne faces.
Insonuere novis lethalia cornua nervis,
Triste micant ferro tela corusca novo.
Jamque vel invictam tentat superasse Dianam,
Quæque sedet sacro Vesta pudica foco.
Ipsa senescentem reparat Venus annua formam,
Atque iterum tepido creditur orta mari.
Marmoreas juvenes clamant Hymenæe per urbes,
Littus Io Hymen, et cava saxa sonant.
Cultior ille venit, tunicâque decentior aptâ,
Puniceum redolet vestis odora crocum.
Egrediturque frequens ad amœni gaudia veris
Virgineos auro cincta puella sinus.
Votum est cuique suum, votum est tamen omnibus unum,
Ut sibi quem cupiat, det Cytherea virum.
Nunc quoque septenâ modulatur arundine pastor,
Et sua quæ jungat carmina Phyllis habet.

Navita nocturno placat sua sidera cantu,
Delphinasque leves ad vada summa vocat.
Jupiter ipse alto cum conjuge ludit Olympo,
Convocat et famulos ad sua festa Deos.
Nunc etiam Satyri, cum sera crepuscula surgunt,
Pervolitant celeri florea rura choro,
Sylvanusque suâ cyparissi fronde revinctus,
Semicaperque Deus, semideusque caper.
Quæque sub arboribus Dryades latuere vetustis
Per juga, per solos expatiantur agros.
Per sata luxuriat fruticetaque Mænalius Pan,
Vix Cybele mater, vix sibi tuta Ceres;
Atque aliquam cupidus prædatur Oreada Faunus,
Consulit in trepidos dum sibi nympha pedes,
Jamque latet, latitansque cupit male tecta videri,
Et fugit, et fugiens pervelit ipsa capi.
Dii quoque non dubitant cœlo præponere sylvas,
Et sua quisque sibi numina lucus habet.
Et sua quisque diu sibi numina lucus habeto,
Nec vos arborea, dii, precor, ite domo.
Te referant miseris te, Jupiter, aurea terris
Sæcla, quid ad nimbos aspera tela redis?
Tu saltem lentè rapidos age Phœbe jugales
Quà potes, et sensim tempora veris eant;
Brumaque productas tarde ferat hispida noctes,
Ingruat et nostro serior umbra polo.

ELEGIA SEXTA.

Ad CAROLUM DEODATUM *ruri commorantem,*

Qui cum Idibus Decemb. scripsisset, et sua carmina excusari postulasset si solito minus essent bona, quod inter lautitias, quibus erat ab amicis exceptus, haud satis felicem operam Musis dare se posse affirmabat, hoc habuit responsum.

MITTO tibi sanam non pleno ventre salutem,
Qua tu distento fortè carere potes.
At tua quid nostram prolectat musa camœnam,
Nec sinit optatas posse sequi tenebras?
Carmine scire velis quàm te redamemque colamque,
Crede mihi vix hoc carmine scire queas.

Nam neque noster amor modulis includitur arctis,
Nec venit ad claudos integer ipse pedes.
Quàm bene solennes epulas, hilaremque Decembrem,
Festaque cœlifugam quæ coluere Deum,
Deliciasque refers, hyberni gaudia ruris,
Haustaque per lepidos Gallica musta focos!
Quid quereris refugam vino dapibusque poesin?
Carmen amat Bacchum, carmina Bacchus amat.
Nec puduit Phœbum virides gestasse corymbos,
Atque hederam lauro præposuisse suæ.
Sæpius Aoniis clamavit collibus Euœ
Mista Thyoneo turba novena choro.
Naso Corallæis mala carmina misit ab agris:
Non illic epulæ, non sata vitis erant.
Quid nisi vina, rosasque racemiferumque Lyæum,
Cantavit brevibus Teïa Musa modis?
Pindaricosque inflat numeros Teumesius Euan,
Et redolet sumptum pagina quæque merum;
Dum gravis everso currus crepat axe supinus,
Et volat Eleo pulvere fuscus eques.
Quadrimoque madens Lyricen Romanus Iaccho
Dulce canit Glyceran, flavicomamque Chloen.
Jam quoque lauta tibi generoso mensa paratu
Mentis alit vires, ingeniumque fovet.
Massica fœcundam despumant pocula venam,
Fundis et ex ipso condita metra cado.
Addimus his artes, fusumque per intima Phœbum
Corda, favent uni Bacchus, Apollo, Ceres.
Scilicet haud mirum tam dulcia carmina per te
Numine composito tres peperisse Deos.
Nunc quoque Thressa tibi cælato barbitos auro
Insonat argutâ molliter icta manu;
Auditurque chelys suspensa tapetia circum,
Virgineos tremulâ quæ regat arte pedes.
Illa tuas saltem teneant spectacula musas,
Et revocent, quantum crapula pellit iners,
Crede mihi dum psallit ebur, comitataque plectru
Implet odoratos festa chorea tholos;
Percipies tacitum per pectora serpere Phœbum,
Quale repentinus permeat ossa calor,
Perque puellares oculos digitumque sonantem
Irruet in totos lapsa Thalia sinus.
Namque elegia levis multorum cura Deorum est,
Et vocat ad numeros quemlibet illa suos;

Liber adest elegis, Eratoque, Ceresque, Venusque,
Et cum purpureâ matre tenellus Amor.
Talibus inde licent convivia larga poetis,
Sæpius et veteri commaduisse mero.
At qui bella refert, et adulto sub Jove cœlum,
Heroasque pios, semideosque duces,
Et nunc sancta canit superum consulta deorum,
Nunc latrata fero regna profunda cane,
Ille quidem parcè, Samii pro more magistri,
Vivat, et innocuos præbeat herba cibos;
Stet prope fagineo pellucida lympha catillo,
Sobriaque è puro pocula fonte bibat.
Additur huic scelerisque vacans, et casta juventus,
Et rigidi mores, et sine labe manus.
Qualis veste nitens sacrâ, et lustralibus undis
Surgis ad infensos augur iture Deos.
Hoc ritu vixisse ferunt post rapta sagacem
Lumina Tiresian, Ogygiumque Linon,
Et lare devoto profugum Calchanta, senemque
Orpheon edomitis sola per antra feris;
Sic dapis exiguus, sic rivi potor Homerus
Dulichium vexit per freta longa virum,
Et per monstrificam Perseiæ Phœbados aulam,
Et vada fœmineis insidiosa sonis,
Perque tuas, rex ime, domos, ubi sanguine nigro
Dicitur umbrarum detinuisse greges.
Diis etenim sacer est vates, divûmque sacerdos,
Spirat et occultum pectus, et ora Jovem.
At tu, siquid agam, scitabere (si modò saltem
Esse putas tanti noscere siquid agam).
Paciferum canimus cœlesti semine regem,
Faustaque sacratis sæcula pacta libris,
Vagitumque Dei, et stabulantem paupere tecto
Qui suprema suo cum patre regna colit,
Stelliparumque polum, modulantesque æthere turmas,
Et subitò elisos ad sua fana Deos.
Dona quidem dedimus Christi natalibus illa,
Illa sub auroram lux mihi prima tulit.
Te quoque pressa manent patriis meditata cicutis,
Tu mihi, cui recitem, judicis instar eris.

ELEGIA SEPTIMA.

ANNO ÆTATIS 19.

NONDUM blanda tuas leges, Amathusia, nôram,
Et Paphio vacuum pectus ab igne fuit.
Sæpe cupidineas, puerilia tela, sagittas,
Atque tuum sprevi maxime numen Amor,
Tu puer imbelles, dixi, transfige columbas,
Conveniunt tenero mollia bella duci.
Aut de passeribus tumidos age, parve, triumphos,
Hæc sunt militiæ digna trophæa tuæ.
In genus humanum quid inania dirigis arma?
Non valet in fortes ista pharetra viros.
Non tulit hoc Cyprius (neque enim Deus ullus ad iras
Promptior), et duplici jam ferus igne calet.
Ver erat, et summæ radians per culmina villæ
Attulerat primam lux tibi, Maie, diem:
At mihi adhuc refugam quærebant lumina noctem,
Nec matutinum sustinuere jubar.
Astat Amor lecto, pictis Amor impiger alis,
Prodidit astantem mota pharetra Deum:
Prodidit et facies, et dulce minantis ocelli,
Et quicquid puero dignum et Amore fuit.
Talis in æterno juvenis Sigeius Olympo
Miscet amatori pocula plena Jovi;
Aut qui formosas pellexit ad oscula nymphas
Thiodamantæus Naiade raptus Hylas.
Addideratque iras, sed et has decuisse putares,
Addideratque truces, nec sine felle minas.
Et miser exemplo sapuisses tutiùs, inquit,
Nunc mea quid possit dextera testis eris.
Inter et expertos vires numerabere nostras,
Et faciam vero per tua damna fidem.
Ipse ego, si nescis, strato Pythone superbum
Edomui Phœbum, cessit et ille mihi;
Et quoties meminit Peneidos, ipse fatetur
Certiùs et graviùs tela nocere mea.
Me nequit adductum curvare peritiùs arcum,
Qui post terga solet vincere Parthus eques:
Cydoniusque mihi cedit venator, et ille
Inscius uxori qui necis author erat.

Est etiam nobis ingens quoque victus Orion,
Herculeæque manus, Herculeusque comes.
Jupiter ipse licet sua fulmina torqueat in me,
Hærebunt lateri spicula nostra Jovis.
Cætera quæ dubitas meliùs mea tela docebunt,
Et tua non leviter corda petenda mihi.
Nec te, stulte, tuæ poterunt defendere musæ,
Nec tibi Phœbæus porriget anguis opem.
Dixit, et aurato quatiens mucrone sagittam,
Evolat in tepidos Cypridos ille sinus.
At mihi risuro tonuit ferus ore minaci,
Et mihi de puero non metus ullus erat.
Et modò quà nostri spatiantur in urbe Quirites,
Et modò villarum proxima rura placent.
Turba frequens, faciéque simillima turba dearum
Splendida per medias itque reditque vias.
Auctaque luce dies gemino fulgore coruscat,
Fallor? An et radios hinc quoque Phœbus habet?
Hæc ego non fugi spectacula grata severus,
Impetus et quò me fert juvenilis, agor,
Lumina luminibus malé providus obvia misi,
Neve oculos potui continuisse meos.
Unam fortè aliis supereminuisse notabam,
Principium nostri lux erat illa mali.
Sic Venus optaret mortalibus ipsa videri
Sic regina Deûm conspicienda fuit.
Hanc memor objecit nobis malus ille Cupido,
Solus et hos nobis texuit antè dolos.
Nec procul ipse vafer latuit, multæque sagittæ,
Et facis à tergo grande pependit onus.
Nec mora, nunc ciliis hæsit, nunc virginis ori,
Insilit hinc labiis, insidet inde genis:
Et quascunque agilis partes jaculator oberrat,
Hei mihi, mille locis pectus inerme ferit.
Protinus insoliti subierunt corda furores,
Uror amans intùs, flammaque totus eram.
Interea misero quæ jam mihi sola placebat,
Ablata est oculis non reditura meis.
Ast ego progredior tacitè querebundus, et excors,
Et dubius volui sæpe referre pedem
Findor, et hæc remanet, sequitur pars altera votum,
Raptaque tam subitò gaudia flere juvat.
Sic dolet amissum proles Junonia cœlum,
Inter Lemniacos præcipitata focos.

Talis et abreptum solem respexit, ad Orcum
Vectus ab attonitis Amphiaraus equis.
Quid faciam infelix, et luctu victus? Amores
Nec licet inceptos ponere, neve sequi.
O utinam, spectare semel mihi detur amatos
Vultus, et coràm tristia verba loqui!
Forsitan et duro non est adamante creata,
Forte nec ad nostras surdeat illa preces.
Crede mihi, nullus sic infeliciter arsit,
Ponar in exemplo primus et unus ego.
Parce, precor, teneri cum sis Deus ales amoris,
Pugnent officio nec tua facta tuo.
Jam tuus O certè est mihi formidabilis arcus,
Nate deâ, jaculis nec minus igne potens:
Et tua fumabunt nostris altaria donis,
Solus et in superis tu mihi summus eris.
Deme meos tandem, verùm nec deme, furores,
Nescio cur, miser est suaviter omnis amans:
Tu modo da facilis, posthæc mea siqua futura est,
Cuspis amaturos figat ut una duos.

Hæc ego mente olim lævâ, studioque supino,
Nequitiæ posui vana trophæa meæ.
Scilicet abreptum sic me malus impulit error,
Indocilisque ætas prava magistra fuit.
Donec Socraticos umbrosa Academia rivos
Præbuit, admissum dedocuitque jugum.
Protinus extinctis ex illo tempore flammis,
Gincta rigent multo pectora nostra gelu.
Unde suis frigus metuit puer ipse sagittis,
Et Diomedèam vim timet ipsa Venus.

Epigrammatum Liber.

IN PRODITIONEM BOMBARDICAM.

Cum simul in regem nuper satrapasque Britannos
Ausus es infandum, perfide Fauxe, nefas,
Fallor? An et mitis voluisti ex parte videri,
Et pensare malâ cum pietate scelus?
Scilicet hos alti missurus ad atria cœli,
Sulphureo curru flammivolisque rotis.
Qualiter ille feris caput inviolabile Parcis
Liquit Iördanios turbine raptus agros.

IN EANDEM.

Siccine tentasti cœlo donâsse Iäcobum
Quæ septemgemino Bellua monte lates?
Ni meliora tuum poterit dare munera numen,
Parce precor donis insidiosa tuis.
Ille quidem sine te consortia serus adivit
Astra, nec inferni pulveris usus ope
Sic potiùs fœdos in cœlum pelle cucullos,
Et quot habet brutos Roma profana Deos,
Namque hac aut aliâ nisi quemque adjuveris arte,
Crede mihi, cœli vix bene scandet iter.

IN EANDEM.

Purgatorem animæ derisit Iäcobus ignem,
Et sine quo supérûm non adeunda domus.
Frenduit hoc trinâ monstrum Latiale coronâ,
Movit et horrificum cornua dena minax.

Et nec inultus, ait, temnes mea sacra Britanne?
Supplicium spretâ religione dabis.
Et si stelligeras unquam penetraveris arces,
Non nisi per flammas triste patebit iter.
O quàm funesto cecinisti proxima vero,
Verbaque ponderibus vix caritura suis!
Nam prope Tartareo sublime rotatus ab igni
Ibat ad æthereas umbra perusta plagas.

IN EANDEM.

Quem modò Roma suis devoverat impia diris,
Et Styge damnârat Tænarioque sinu,
Hunc vice mutatâ jam tollerè gestit ad astra,
Et cupit ad superos evehere usque Deos.

IN INVENTOREM BOMBARDÆ.

Iapetionidem laudavit cæca vetustas,
Qui tulit ætheream solis ab axe facem;
At mihi major erit, qui lurida creditur arma,
Et trifidum fulmen surripuisse Jovi.

AD LEONORAM ROMÆ CANENTEM.

Angelus unicuique suus (sic credite gentes)
Obtigit æthereis ales ab ordinibus.
Quid mirum, Leonora, tibi si gloria major?
Nam tua præsentem vox sonat ipsa Deum.
Aut Deus, aut vacui certè mens tertia cœli,
Per tua secretò guttura serpit agens;
Serpit agens, facilisque docet mortalia corda
Sensim immortali assuescere posse sono.
Quòd si cuncta quidem Deus est, per cunctaque fusus,
In te unâ loquitur, cætera mutus habet.

AD EANDEM.

Altera Torquatum cepit Leonora poëtam,
Cujus ab insano cessit amore furens.
Ah miser ille tuo quantò feliciùs ævo
Perditus, et propter te, Leonora, foret!
Et te Pieriâ sensisset voce canentem
Aurea maternæ fila movere lyræ:
Quamvis Dircæo torsisset lumina Pentheo
Sævior, aut totus desipuisset iners,
Tu tamen errantes cæcâ vertigine sensus
Voce eadem poteras composuisse tuâ;
Et poteras, ægro spirans sub corde, quietem
Flexanimo cantu restituisse sibi.

AD EANDEM.

Credula quid liquidam Sirena Neapoli jactas,
Claraque Partheuopes fana Acheloïados,
Littoreamque tuâ defunctam Naiada ripâ,
Corpora Chalcidico sacra dedisse rogo?
Illa quidem vivitque, et amœnâ Tibridis undâ
Mutavit rauci murmura Pausilipi.
Illic Romulidûm studiis ornata secundis,
Atque homines cantu detinet atque Deos.

APOLOGUS DE RUSTICO ET HERO.[1]

Rusticus ex malo sapidissima poma quotannis
Legit, et urbano lecta dedit Domino:
Hinc incredibili fructûs dulcedine captus,
Malum ipsam in proprias transtulit areolas.
Hactenus illa ferax, sed longo debilis ævo,
Mota solo assueto, protinùs aret iners.
Quod tandem ut patuit Domino, spe lusus inani,
Damnavit celeres in sua damna manus.
Atque ait, "Heu quantò satius fuit illa Coloni
(Parva licet) grato dona tulisse animo!
Possem ego avaritiam frænare, gulamque voracem:
Nunc periere mihi et fœtus, et ipse parens."

[1] Added in the edition of 1673.

Sylvarum Liber.

IN OBITUM PROCANCELLARII MEDICI[1]

ANNO ÆTATIS, 16.

PARERE fati discite legibus,
  Manusque Parcæ jam date supplices,
Qui pendulum telluris orbem
  Iäpeti colitis nepotes.
Vos si relicto mors vaga Tænaro
Semel vocârit flebilis, heu moræ
  Tentantur incassùm dolique;
    Per tenebras Stygis ire certum est.
Si destinatam pellere dextera
Mortem valeret, non ferus Hercules,
  Nessi venenatus cruore
    Æmathiâ jacuisset Oetâ,
Nec fraude turpi Palladis invidæ
Vidisset occisum Ilion Hectora, aut
  Quem larva Pelidis peremit
    Ense Locro, Jove lacrymante.
Si triste fatum verba Hecatëia
Fugare possint, Telegoni parens
  Vixisset infamis, potentique
    Ægiali soror usa virgâ.
Numenque trinum fallere si queant
Artes medentûm, ignotaque gramina,
  Non gnarus herbarum Machaon
    Eurypyli cecidisset hastâ.

[1] ... John Goslyn, Master of Caius College, and the king's professor of physic, who died when he was a second time vice chancellor, in October, 1626. So that the date of Milton's age is wrong.

Læsisset et nec te, Philyreie,
Sagitta Echidnæ perlita sanguine,
Nec tela te fulmenque avitum
Cæse puer genitricis alvo.
Tuque O alumno major Apolline,
Gentis togatæ cui regimen datum,
Frondosa quem nunc Cirrha luget,
Et mediis Helicon in undis,
Jam præfuisses Palladio gregi
Lætus, superstes, nec sine gloria,
Nec puppe lustrasses Charontis
Horribiles barathri recessus.
At fila rupit Persephone tua,
Irata, cum te viderit, artibus,
Succoque pollenti. tot atris
Faucibus eripuisse mortis.
Colende Præses, membra precor tua
Molli quiescant cespite, et ex tuo
Crescant rosæ calthæque busto,
Purpureoque hyacinthus ore.
Sit mite de te judicium Æaci,
Subrideatque Ætnæa Proserpina,
Interque felices perennis
Elysio spatiere campo.

IN QUINTUM NOVEMBRIS.

Anno Ætatis 17.

Jam pius extremâ veniens Iäcobus ab arcto
Teucrigenas populos, latéque patentia regna,
Albionum tenuit, jamque inviolabile fœdus
Sceptra Caledoniis conjunxerat Anglica Scotis:
Pacificusque novo, felix divesque, sedebat
In solio, occultique doli securus et hostis:
Cum ferus ignifluo regnans Acheronte tyrannus
Eumenidum pater, æthereo vagus exul Olympo,
Forte per immensum terrarum erraverat orbem,
Dinumerans sceleris socios, vernasque fideles,
Participes regni post funera mœsta futuros;
Hic tempestates medio ciet aëre diras,
Illic unanimes odium struit inter amicos,
Armat et invictas in mutua viscera gentes·

Regnaque olivifera vertit florentia pace:
Et quoscunque videt puræ virtutis amantes,
Hos cupit adjicere imperio, fraudumque magister
Tentat inaccessum sceleri corrumpere pectus,
Insidiasque locat tacitas, cassesque latentes
Tendit, ut incautos rapiat, seu Caspia tigris
Insequitur trepidam deserta per avia prædam
Nocte sub illuni, et somno nictantibus astris.
Talibus infestat populos Summanus et urbes,
Cinctus ceruleæ fumanti turbine flammæ,
Jamque fluentisonis albentia rupibus arva
Apparent, et terra deo dilecta marino,
Cui nomen dederat quondam Neptunia proles,
Amphitryoniaden qui non dubitavit atrocem,
Æquore tranato, furiali poscere bello,
Ante expugnatæ crudelia sæcula Trojæ.
At simul hanc opibusque et festâ pace beatam
Aspicit, et pingues donis Cerealibus agros,
Quodque magis doluit, venerantem numina veri
Sancta Dei populum, tandem suspiria rupit
Tartareos ignes et luridum olentia sulphur;
Qualia Trinacria trux ab Jove clausus in Ætna
Efflat tabifico monstrosus ob ore Typhœus.
Ignescunt oculi, stridetque adamantinus ordo
Dentis, ut armorum fragor, ictaque cuspide cuspis.
Atqué "Pererrato solum hoc lacrymabile mundo
Inveni," dixit, "gens hæc mihi sola rebellis,
Contemtrixque jugi, nostraque potentior arte.
Illa tamen, mea si quicquam tentamina possunt,
Non feret hoc impune diu, non ibit inulta."
Hactenus; et piceis liquido natat aëre pennis;
Quà volat, adversi præcursant agmine venti,
Densantur nubes, et crebra tonitrua fulgent.
Jamque pruinosas velox superaverat Alpes,
Et tenet Ausoniæ fines: à parte sinistra
Nimbifer Appenninus erat, priscique Sabini,
Dextra veneficiis infamis Hetruria, nec non
Te furtiva, Tibris, Thetidi videt oscula dantem;
Hinc Mavortigenæ consistit in arce Quirini.
Reddiderant dubiam jam sera crepuscula lucem,
Cum circumgreditur totam Tricoronifer urbem,
Panificosque deos portat, scapulisque virorum
Evehitur, præeunt submisso poplite reges,
Et mendicantum series longissima fratrum;

Cersaque in manibus gestant funalia cæci,
Cimmeriis nati in tenebris, vitamque trahentes.
Templa dein multis subeunt lucentia tædis
(Vesper erat sacer iste Petro) fremitusque canentum
Sæpe tholos implet vacuos, et inane locorum.
Qualiter exululat Bromius, Bromiique caterva,
Orgia cantantes in Echionio Aracyntho,
Dum tremit attonitus vitreis Asopus in undis.
Et procul ipse cavâ responsat rupe Cithæron.
His igitur tandem solenni more peractis,
Nox senis amplexus Erebi taciturna reliquit,
Præcipitesque impellit equos stimulante flagello,
Captum oculis Typhlonta, Melanchætemque ferocem,
Atque Acherontæo prognatam patre Siopen
Torpidam, et hirsutis horrentem Phrica capillis.
Interea regum domitor, Phlegetontius hæres
Ingreditur thalamos (neque enim secretus adulter
Producit steriles molli sine pellice noctes),
At vix compositos somnus claudebat ocellos,
Cum niger umbrarum dominus, rectorque silentum,
Prædatorque hominum, falsâ sub imagine tectus
Astitit, assumptis micuerunt tempora canis,
Barba sinus promissa tegit, cineracea longo
Syrmate verrit humum vestis, pendetque cucullus
Vertice de raso, et ne quicquam desit ad artes,
Cannabeo lumbos constrinxit fune salaces,
Tarda fenestratis figens vestigia calceis.
Talis, uti fama est, vastâ Franciscus eremo
Tetra vagabatur solus per lustra ferarum,
Sylvestrique tulit genti pia verba salutis
Impius, atque lupos domuit, Libycosque leones.
Subdolus at tali Serpens velatus amictu
Solvit in has fallax ora execrantia voces;
Dormis, nate? Etiamne tuos sopor opprimit artus?
Immemor O fidei, pecorumque oblite tuorum!
Dum cathedram venerande tuam, diademaque triplex
Ridet Hyperboreo gens barbara nata sub axe,
Dumque pharetrati sperunt tua jura Britanni:
Surge, age, surge piger, Latius quem Cæsar adorat.
Cui reserata patet convexi janua cœli,
Turgentes animos, et fastus frange procaces,
Sacrilegique sciant, tua quid maledictio possit,
Et quid Apostolicæ possit custodia clavis;
Et memor Hespeciæ disjectam ulciscere classem,

Mersaque Iberorum lato vexilla profundo,
Sanctorumque cruci tot corpora fixa probrosæ,
Thermodoontea nuper regnante puella.
At tu si tenero mavis torpescere lecto,
Crescentesque negas hosti contundere vires,
Tyrrhenum implebit numeroso milite pontum,
Signaque Aventino ponet fulgentia colle:
Reliquias veterum franget, flammisque cremabit,
Sacraque calcabit pedibus tua colla profanis,
Cujus gaudebant soleis dare basia reges.
Nec tamen hunc bellis et aperto Marte lacesses,
Irritus ille labor: tu callidus utere fraude:
Quælibet hæreticis disponere retia fas est.
Jamque ad consilium extremis rex magnus ab oris
Patricios vocat, et procerum de stirpe creatos,
Grandævosque patres trabeâ, canisque verendos:
Hos tu membratim poteris conspergere in auras,
Atque dare in cineres, nitrati pulveris igne
Ædibus injecto, quà convenere, sub imis.
Protinus ipse igitur quoscunque habet Anglia fidos
Propositi, factique mone: quisquámne tuorum
Audebit summi non jussa facessere Papæ?
Perculsosque metu subito, casúque stupentes
Invadat vel Gallus atrox, vel sævus Iberus.
Sæcula sic illic tandem Mariana redibunt,
Tuque in belligeros iterum dominaberis Anglos
Et nequid timeas, divos divasque secundas
Accipe, quotque tuis celebrantur numina fastis.
Dixit, et adscitos ponens malefidus amictus
Fugit ad infandam, regnum illætabile, Lethen.
Jam rosea Eoas, pandens Tithonia portas,
Vestit inauratas redeunti lumine terras;
Mœstaque adhuc nigri deplorans funera nati
Irrigat ambrosiis montana cacumina guttis;
Cum somnos pepulit stellatæ janitor aulæ,
Nocturnos visus, et somnia grata revolvens.[1]
Est locus æternâ septus caligine noctis,
Vasta ruinosi quondam fundamina tecti,
Nunc torvi spelunca Phoni, Prodotæque bilingues,
Effera quos uno peperit Discordia partu.
Hic inter cæmenta jacent prærupta saxa,
Ossa inhumata virûm, et trajecta cadavera ferro
Hic Dolus intortis semper sedet ater ocellis,

[1] Forsan—resolvens.

Jurgiaque, et stimulis armata Calumnia fauces,
Et Furor, atque viæ moriendi mille videntur,
Et Timor, exsanguisque locum circumvolat Horror,
Perpetuoque leves per muta silentia Manes
Exululant, tellus et sanguine conscia stagnat.
Ipsi etiam pavidi latitant penetralibus antri
Et Phonos, et Prodotes, nulloque sequente per antrum.
Antrum horrens, scopulosum, atrum feralibus umbris
Diffugiunt sontes, et retrò lumina vortunt;
Hos pugiles Romæ per sæcula longa fideles
Evocat antistes Babylonius, atque ita fatur:
"Finibus occiduis circumfusum incolit æquor
Gens exosa mihi, prudens natura negavit
Indignam penitus nostro conjungere mundo:
Illuc, sic jubeo, celeri contendite gressu,
Tartareoque leves difflentur pulvere in auras
Et rex et pariter satrapæ, scelerata propago:
Et quotquot fidei caluere cupidine veræ,
Consilii socios adhibete, operisque ministros"
Finierat, rigidi cupidè paruere gemelli.
Interea longo flectens curvamine cœlos
Despicit æthereâ dominus qui fulgurat arce,
Vanaque perversæ ridet conamina turbæ,
Atque sui causam populi volet ipse tueri.
Esse ferunt spatium, quà distat ab Aside terra
Fertilis Europe, et spectat Mareotidas undas;
Hic turris posita est Titanidos ardua Famæ,
Ærea, lata, sonans, rutilis vicinior astris
Quàm superimpositum vel Athos vel Pelioñ Ossæ.
Mille fores aditusque patent, totidemque fenestræ,
Amplaque per tenues translucent atria muros:
Excitat hic varios plebs agglomerata susurros;
Qualiter instrepitant circum mulctralia bombis
Agmina muscarum, aut texto per ovilia junco,
Dum Canis æstivum cœli petit ardua culmen.
Ipsa quidem summâ sedet ultrix matris in arce,
Auribus innumeris cinctum caput eminet olli,
Queis sonitum exiguum trahit, atque levissima captat
Murmura, ab extremis patuli confinibus orbis.
Nec tot, Aristoride servator inique juvencæ
Isidos, immiti volvebas lumina vultu,
Lumina non unquam tacito nutantia somño,
Lumina subjectas late spectantia terras.
Istis illa solet loca luce carentia sæpe

Perlustrare, etiam radianti impervia soli:
Millenisque loquax auditaque visaque linguis
Cuilibet effundit temeraria, veraque mendax
Nunc minuit, modo confictis sermonibus auget.
Sed tamen à nostro meruisti carmine laudes
Fama, bonum quo non aliud veracius ullum,
Nobis digna cani, nec te memorasse pigebit
Carmine tam longo, servati scilicet Angli
Officiis vaga diva tuis, tibi reddimus æqua.
Te Deus, æternos motu qui temperat ignes,
Fulmine præmisso alloquitur, terrâque trementes:
"Fama, siles? An te latet impia Papistarum
Conjurata cohors in meque meosque Britannos,
Et nova sceptrigero cædes meditata lacobo?
Nec plura, illa statim sensit mandata Tonantis,
Et satis ante fugax, stridentes induit alas,
Induit et variis exilii corpora plumis;
Dextra tubam gestat Temesæo ex ære sonoram.
Nec mora, jam pennis cedentes remigat auras,
Atque parum est cursu celeres prævertere nubes,
Jam ventos, jam solis equos post terga reliquit:
Et primo Angliacas, solito de more, per urbes
Ambiguas voces, incertaque murmura spargit,
Mox arguta dolos, et detestabile vulgat
Proditionis opus, nec non facta horrida dictu,
Authoresque addit sceleris, nec garrula cæcis
Insidiis loca structa silet; stupuere relatis,
Et pariter juvenes, pariter tremuere puellæ,
Effœtique senes pariter, tantæque ruinæ
Sensus ad ætatem subito penetraverat omnem.
Attamen interea populi miserescit ab alto
Ætherius Pater, et crudelibus obstitit ausis
Papicolûm; capti pœnas raptantur ad acres;
At pia thura Deo, et grati solvuntur honores;
Compita læta focis genialibus omnia fumant;
Turba choros juvenilis agit: Quintoque Novembris
Nulla dies toto occurrit celebratior anno.

IN OBITUM[1] PRÆSULIS ELIENSIS.

ANNO ÆTATIS 17.

ADHUC madentes rore squalebant genæ,
Et sicca nondum lumina
Adhuc liquentis imbre turgebant salis.
Quem nuper effudi pius,
Dum mœsta charo justa persolvi rogo
Wintoniensis Præsulis.
Cum centilinguis Fama (proh! semper mali
Cladisque vera nuntia)
Spargit per urbes divitis Britanniæ,
Populosque Neptuno satos,
Cessisse morti, et ferreis sororibus
Te, generis humani decus,
Qui rex sacrorum illâ fuisti in insulâ
Quæ nomen Anguillæ tenet.
Tunc inquietum pectus irâ protinus
Ebulliebat fervidâ,
Tumulis potentem sæpe devovens deam:
Nec vota Naso in Ibida
Concepit alto diriora pectore,
Graiusque vates parcius
Turpem Lycambis execratus est dolum,
Sponsamque Neobulen suam.
At ecce diras ipse dum fundo graves,
Et imprecor neci necem,
Audisse tales videor attonitus sonos
Leni, sub aurâ, flamine:
"Cæcos furores pone, pone vitream
Bilemque et irritas minas,
Quid temerè violas non nocenda numina,
Subitoque ad iras percita?
Non est, ut arbitraris elusus miser,
Mors atra Noctis filia,
Erebóve patre creta, sive Erinnye,
Vastove nata sub Chao:
Ast illa cœlo missa stellato, Dei
Messes ubique colligit;
Animasque mole carneâ reconditas
In lucem et auras evocat;

[1] Nicholas Felton, who died October 5th, 1626.

Ut cum fugaces excitant Horæ diem
Themidos Jovisque filiæ;
Et sempiterni ducit ad vultus patris;
At justa raptat impios
Sub regna furvi luctuosa Tartari,
Sedesque subterraneas."
Hanc ut vocantem lætus audivi, cito
Fœdum reliqui carcerem,
Volatilesque faustus inter milites
Ad astra sublimis feror:
Vates ut olim raptus ad cœlum senex
Auriga currus ignei.
Non me Bootis terruere lucidi
Sarraca tarda frigore, aut
Formidolosi Scorpionis brachia
Non ensis, Orion, tuus.
Prætervolavi fulgidi solis globum,
Longéque sub pedibus deam
Vidi triformem, dum coërcebat suos
Frænis dracones aureis.
Erraticorum siderum per ordines,
Per lacteas vehor plagas,
Velocitatem sæpe miratus novam,
Donec nitentes ad fores
Ventum est Olympi, et regiam crystallinam, et
Stratum smaragdis atrium.
Sed hic tacebo, nam quis effari queat
Oriundus humano patre
Amœnitates illius loci? Mihi
Sat est in æternum frui.

NATURAM NON PATI SENIUM.

Heu quàm perpetuis erroribus acta fatiscit
Avia mens hominum, tenebrisque immersa profundis
Œdipodioniam volvit sub pectore noctem!
Quæ vesana suis metiri facta deorum
Audet, et incisas leges adamante perenni
Assimilare suis, nulloque solubile sæclo
Consilium fati perituris alligat horis.
Ergóne marcescet sulcantibus obsita rugis
Naturæ facies, et rerum publica mater
Omniparum contracta uterum sterilescet ab ævo?

Et sæ fassa senem, malè certis passibus ibit
Sidereum tremebunda caput? Num tetra vetustas
Annorumque æterna fames, squalorque situsque
Sidera vexabunt? An et insatiabile Tempus
Esuriet Cœlum, rapietque in viscera patrem?
Heu, potuitne suas imprudens Jupiter arces
Hoc contra munisse nefas, et Temporis isto
Exemisse malo, gyrosque dedisse perennes?
Ergo erit ut quandoque sono dilapsa tremendo
Convexi tabulata ruant, atque obvius ictu
Stridat uterque polus, superâque ut Olympius aulâ
Decidat, horribilisque retectâ Gorgone Pallas;
Qualis in Ægeam proles Junonia Lemnon
Deturbata sacro cecidit de limine cœli?
Tu quoque, Phœbe, tui casus imitabere nati;
Præcipiti curru, subitâque ferere ruinâ
Pronus, et extinctâ fumabit lampade Nereus,
Et dabit attonito feralia sibilâ ponto.
Tunc etiam aërei divulsis sedibus Hæmi
Dissultabit apex, imoque allisa barathro
Terrebunt Stygium dejecta Ceraunia Ditem,
In superos quibus usus erat, fraternaque bella.
At Pater omnipotens, fundatis fortius astris,
Consuluit rerum summæ, certoque peregit
Pondere fatorum lances, atque ordine summo
Singula perpetuum jussit servare tenorem.
Volvitur hinc lapsu mundi rota prima diurno;
Raptat et ambitos sociâ vertigine cœlos.
Tardior haud solito Saturnus, et acer ut olim
Fulmineum rutilat cristatâ casside Mavors.
Floridus æternùm Phœbus juvenile coruscat,
Nec fovet effœtas loca per declivia terras,
Devexo temone Deus; sed semper amicâ
Luce potens eadem currit per signa rotarum.
Surgit odoratis pariter formosus ab Indis,
Æthereum pecus albenti qui cogit Olympo,
Mane vocans, et serus agens in pascua cœli,
Temporis et gemino dispertit regna colore.
Fulget, obitque vices alterno Delia cornu,
Cæruleumque ignem paribus complectitur ulnis.
Nec variant elementa fidem, solitoque fragore
Lurida perculsas jaculantur fulmina rupes.
Nec per inane furit leviori murmure Corus,
Stringit et armiferos æquali horrore Gelonos

Trux Aquilo, spiraque hyemem, nimbosque volutat.
Utque solet, Siculi diverberat ima Pelori
Rex maris, at raucâ circumstrepit æquora conchâ
Oceani Tubicen, nec vastâ mole minorem
Ægeona ferunt dorso Balearica cete.
Sed neque, Terra, tibi sæcli vigor ille vetusti
Priscus abest, servatque suum Narcissus odorem
Et puer ille suum tenet et puer ille decorem,
Phœbe, tuusque, et, Cypri, tuus; nec ditior olim
Terra datum sceleri celavit montibus aurum
Conscia, vel sub aquis gemmas. Sic denique in ævum
Ibit cunctarum series justissima rerum,
Donec flamma orbem populabitur ultima, latè
Circumplexa polos, et vasti culmina cœli;
Ingentique rogo flagrabit machina mundi.

DE IDEA PLATONICA QUEMADMODUM ARISTOTELES INTELLEXIT.

Dicite, sacrorum præsides nemorum deæ,
Tuque, O noveni perbeata numinis
Memoria mater, quæque in immenso procul
Antro recumbis otiosa Æternitas,
Monumenta servans, et ratas leges Jovis,
Cœlique fastos atque ephemeridas Deûm,
Quis ille primus cujus ex imagine
Natura solers finxit humanum genus,
Æternus, incorruptus, æquævus polo,
Unusque et universus, exemplar Dei?
Haud ille Palladis gemellus innubæ
Interna proles insidet menti Jovis;
Sed quamlibet natura sit communior,
Tamen seorsùs extat ad morem unius,
Et, mira, certo stringitur spatio loci;
Seu sempiternus ille siderum comes
Cœli pererrat ordines decemplicis,
Citimumve terris incolit lunæ globum:
Sive inter animas corpus adituras sedens
Obliviosas torpet ad Lethes aquas;
Sive in remotâ fortè terrarum plaga
Incedit ingens hominis archetypus gigas,
Et diis tremendus erigit celsum caput

Atlante major portitore siderum.
Non cui profundum cæcitas lumen dedit
Dircæus augur vidit hunc alto sinu;
Non hunc silente nocte Pleïones nepos
Vatum sagaci præpes ostendit choro;
Non hunc sacerdos novit Assyrius, licet
Longos vetusti commemoret atavos Nini,
Priscumque Belon, inclytumque Osiridem.
Non ille trino gloriosus nomine
Ter magnus Hermes (ut sit arcani sciens)
Talem reliquit Isidis cultoribus.
At tu, perenne ruris Academi decus
(Hæc monstra si tu primus induxti scholis),
Jam jam poetas, urbis exules tuæ,
Revocabis, ipse fabulator maximus,
Aut institutor ipse migrabis foras.

AD PATREM.

Nunc mea Pierios cupiam per pectora fontes
Irriguas torquere vias, totumque per ora
Volvere laxatum gemino de vertice rivum;
Ut tenues oblita sonos audacibus alis
Surgat in officium venerandi Musa parentis.
Hoc utcunque tibi gratum, pater optime, carmen
Exiguum meditatur opus, nec novimus ipsi
Aptius à nobis quæ possint munera donis
Respondere tuis, quamvis nec maxima possint
Respondere tuis, nedum ut par gratia doris
Esse queat, vacuis quæ redditur arida verbis.
Sed tamen hæc nostros ostendit pagina census,
Et quod habemus opum chartâ numeravimus istâ,
Quæ mihi sunt nullæ, nisi quas dedit aurea Clio,
Quas mihi semoto somni peperere sub antro,
Et nemoris laureta sacri Parnassides umbræ.
Nec tu vatis opus divinum despice carmen,
Quo nihil æthereos ortus, et semina cœli,
Nil magis humanam commendat origine mentem,
Sancta Promethææ retinens vestigia flammæ.
Carmen ament superi, tremebundaque Tartara carmen
Ima ciere valet, divosque ligare profundos,

Et triplici duręa Manes adamante coercet.
Carmine sepositi retegunt arcana futuri
Phœbades, et tremulæ pallentes ora Sibyllæ,
Carmina sacrificus sollennes pangit ad aras,
Aurea seu sternit motantem cornua taurum;
Seu cùm fata sagax fumantibus abdita fibris
Consulit, et tepidis Parcam scrutatur in extis
Nos etiam patrium tunc cum repetemus Olympum,
Æternæque moræ stabunt immobilis ævi,
Ibimus auratis per cœli templa coronis,
Dulcia suaviloquo sociantes carmina plectro,
Astra quibus, geminique poli convexa sonabunt.
Spiritus et rapidos qui circinat igneus orbes,
Nunc quoque sidereis intercinit ipse choreis
Immortale melos, et inenarrabile carmen;
Torrida dum rutilus compescit sibila serpens,
Demissoque ferox gladio mansuescit Orion;
Stellarum nec sentit onus Maurusius Atlas.
Carmina regales epulas ornare solebant,
Cum nondum luxus, vastæque immensa vorago
Nota gulæ, et modico spumabat cœna Lyæo.
Tum de more sedens festa ad convivia vates,
Æsculeâ intonsos redimitus ab arbore crines,
Heroumque actus, imitandaque gesta canebat,
Et chaos, et positi latè fundamina mundi,
Reptantesque deos, et alentes numina glandes,
Et nondum Ætnæo quæsitum fulmen ab antro.
Denique quid vocis modulamen inane juvabit,
Verborum sensusque vacans, numerique loquacis?
Silvestres decet iste choros, non Orphea cantus,
Qui tenuit fluvios et quercubus addidit aures
Carmine, non citharâ, simulachraque funeta canendo
Compulit in lacrymas; habet has à carmine laudes.
Nec tu perge, precor, sacras contemnere Musas,
Nec vanas inopesque puta, quarum ipse peritus
Munere, mille sonos numeros componis ad aptos,
Millibus et vocem modulis variare canoram
Doctus, Arionii meritò sis nominis hæres.
Nunc tibi quid mirum, si me genuisse poëtam
Contigerit, charo si tam propè sanguine juncti
Cognatas artes, studiumque affine sequamur?
Ipse volens Phœbus se dispertire duobus,
Altera dona mihi, dedit altera dona parenti,
Dividuumque Deum genitorque puerque tenemus.

Tu tamen ut simules teneras odisse Camœnas,
Non odisse reor, neque enim, pater, ire jubebas
Quà via lata patet, quà pronior area lucri,
Certaque condendi fulget spes aurea nummi:
Nec rapis ad leges, malè custoditaque gentis
Jura, nec insulsis damnas clamoribus aures:
Sed magis excultam cupiens ditescere mentem,
Me procul urbano strepitu, secessibus altis
Abductum, Aoniæ jucunda per otia ripæ,
Phœbæo lateri comitem sinis ire beatum.
Officium chari taceo commune parentis,
Me poscunt majora: tuo, pater optime, sumptu
Cùm mihi Romuleæ patuit facundia linguæ,
Et Latii veneres, et quæ Jovis ora decebant
Grandia magniloquis elata vocabula Graiis,
Addere suasisti quos jactat Gallia flores,
Et quam degeneri novus Italus ore loquelam
Fundit, barbaricos testatus voce tumultus,
Quæque Palæstinus loquitur mysteria vates.
Denique quicquid habet cœlum, subjectaque cœlo
Terra parens, terræque et cœlo interfluus aer,
Quicquid et unda tegit, pontique agitabile marmor
Per te nosse licet, per te, si nosse libebit.
Dimotáque venit spectanda scientia nube,
Nudaque conspicuos inclinat ad oscula vultus,
Ni fugisse velim, ni sit libâsse molestum.
I nunc, confer opes, quisquis malesanus avitas
Austriaci gazas, Perüanaque regna, præoptas.
Quæ potuit majora pater tribuisse, vel ipse
Jupiter, excepto, donâsset ut omnia, cœlo?
Non potiora dedit, quamvis et tuta fuissent,
Publica qui juveni commisit lumina nato
Atque Hyperionios currus, et fræna diei,
Et circum undantem radiatâ luce tiaram.
Ergo ego jam doctæ pars quamlibet ima catervæ
Victrices hederas inter, laurosque sedebo,
Jamque nec obscurus populo miscebor inerti,
Vitabuntque oculos vestigia nostra profanos.
Este procul vigiles curæ, procul este querelæ,
Invidiæque acies transverso tortilis hirquo,
Sæva nec anguiferos extende calumnia rictus;
In me triste nihil fœdissima turba potestis,
Nec vestri sum juris ego; securaque tutus
Pectora, vipereo gradiar sublimis ab ictu.

At tibi, chare pater, postquam non æqua merenti
Posse referre datur, nec dona rependere factis,
Sit memorâsse satis, repetitaque munera grato
Percensere animo, fidæque reponere menti.
Et vos, O nostri, juvenilia carmina, lusus,
Si modo perpetuos sperare audebitis annos,
Et domini superesse rogo, lucemque tueri,
Nec spisso rapient oblivia nigra sub Orco,
Forsitan has laudes, decantatumque parentis
Nomen, ad exemplum, sero servabitis ævo.

AD SALSILLUM, POETAM ROMANUM, ÆGROTANTEM.

SCAZONTES.

O Musa gressum quæ volens trahis claudum,
Vulcanioque tarda gaudes incessu,
Nec sentis illud in loco minus gratum,
Quàm cùm decentes flava Deïope suras
Alternat aureum ante Junonis lectum,
Adesdum et hæc s' is verba pauca Salsillo
Refer, Camœna nostra cui tantum est cordi,
Quamque ille magnis prætulit immeritò divis
Hæc ergo alumnus ille Londini Milto,
Diebus hisce qui suum linquens nidum
Polique tractum (pessimus ubi ventorum,
Insanientis impotensque pulmonis,
Pernix anhela sub Jove exercet flabra),
Venit feraces Itali soli ad glebas,
Visum superbâ cognitas urbes famâ
Virosque doctæque indolem juventutis.
Tibi optat idem hic fausta multa Salsille,
Habitumque fesso corpori penitùs sanum,
Cui nunc profunda bilis infestat renes,
Præcordiisque fixa damnosum spirat.
Nec id pepercit impia quòd tu Romano
Tam cultus ore Lesbium condis melos.
O dulce divûm munus, O Salus, Hebes
Germana! Tuque Phœbe morborum terror,
Pythone cæso, sive tu magis Pæan
Libenter audis, hic tuus sacerdos est.
Querceta Fauni, vosque rore vinoso
Colles benigni, mitis Evandri sedes,

Siquid salubre vallibus frondet silvestris,
Levamen ægro ferte certatim vati.
Sic ille charis redditus rursùm Musis
Vicina dulci prata mulcebit cantu.
Ipse inter atros emirabitur lucos
Numa, ubi beatum degit otium æternum,
Suam reclinis semper Ægeriam spectans.
Tumidusque et ipse Tibris, hinc delinitus,
Spei favebit annuæ colonorum:
Nec in sepulchris ibit obsessum reges
Nimiùm sinistro laxus irruens loro:
Sed fræna melius temperabit undarum,
Adusque curvi salsa regna Portumni.

MANSUS.

Joannes Baptista Mansus Marchio Villensis, vir ingenii laude, tum litterarum studio, nec non et bellica virtute, apud Italos clarus in primis est. Ad quem Torquati Tassi Dialogus extat de Amicitia scriptus; erat enim Tassi amicissimus; ab quo etiam inter Campaniæ principes celebratur, in illo poemate cui titulus Gerusalemme Conquistata, lib. 20—

"Fra cavalier magnanimi, è cortesi
Risplende il Manso"—

is authorem Neapoli commorantem summâ benevolentiâ prosecutus est, multaque ei detulit humanitatis officia. Ad hunc itaque hospes ille antequam ab ea urbe discederet, ut ne ingratum se ostenderet, hoc carmen misit.

Hæc quoque, Manse, tuæ meditantur carmina laudi
Pierides, tibi, Manse, choro notissime Phœbi,
Quandoquidem ille alium haud æquo est dignatus honore
Post Galli cineres, et Mecænatis Hetrusci.
Tu quoque, si nostræ tantum valet aura Camœnæ,
Victrices hederas inter, laurosque sedebis.
Te pridem magno felix concordia Tasso
Junxit, et æternis inscripsit nomina chartis;
Mox tibi dulciloquum non inscia Musa Marinum
Tradidit, ille tuum dici se gaudet alumnum,
Dum canit Assyrios divûm prolixus amores;
Mollis et Ausonias stupefecit carmine nymphas.
Ille itidem moriens tibi soli debita vates
Ossa, tibi soli, supremaque vota reliquit:

Nec manes pietas tua chara fefellit amici,
Vidimus arridentem operoso ex ære poetam.
Nec satis hoc visum est in utrumque, et nec pia cessant
Officia in tumulo, cupis integros rapere Orco,
Quà potes, atque avidas Parcarum eludere leges:
Amborum genus, et varia sub forte peractam
Describis vitam, moresque, et dona Minervæ;
Æmulus illius Mycalen qui natus ad altam
Rettulit Æolii vitam facundus Homeri.
Ergo ego te, Cliûs et magni nomine Phœbi,
Manse pater, jubeo longum salvere per ævum
Missus Hyperboreo juvenis peregrinus ab axe.
Nec tu longinquam bonus aspernabare Musam,
Quæ nuper gelidâ vix enutrita sub Arcto
Imprudens Italas ausa est volitare per urbes.
Nos etiam in nostro modulantes flumine cygnos
Credimus obscuras noctis sensisse per umbras,
Quà Thamesis late puris argenteus urnis
Oceani glaucos perfundit gurgite crines:
Quin et in has quondam pervenit Tityrus oras.
Sed neque nos genus incultum, nec inutile Phœbo,
Quà plaga septeno mundi sulcata Trione
Brumalem patitur longâ sub nocte Boöten.
Nos etiam colimus Phœbum, nos munera Phœbo
Flaventes spicas, et lutea mala canistris,
Halantemque crocum (perhibet nisi vana vetustas)
Misimus, et lectas Druidum de gente choreas.
(Gens Druides antiqua sacris operata deorum
Heroum laudes imitandaque gesta canebant)
Hinc quoties festo cingunt altaria cantu,
Delo in herbosâ, Graiæ de more puellæ,
Carminibus lætis memorant Corineïda Loxo.
Fatidicamque Upin, cum flavicomâ Hecaërge,
Nuda Caledonio variatas pectora fuco.
Fortunate senex, ergo, quacunque per orbem
Torquati decus, et nomen celebrabitur ingens,
Claraque perpetui succrescet fama Marini,
Tu quoque in ora frequens venies plausumque virorum,
Et parili carpes iter immortale volatu.
Dicetur tum sponte tuos habitasse penates
Cynthius, et famulas venisse ad limina Musas:
At non sponte domum tamen idem, et regis adivit
Rura Pheretiadæ cœlo fugitivus Apollo;
Ille licet magnum Alciden susceperat hospes;

Tantum ubi clamosos placuit vitare bubulcos,
Nobile mansueti cessit Chironis in antrum,
Irriguos inter saltus, frondosaque tecta,
Peneium prope rivum : ibi sæpe sub ilice nigrâ,
Ad citharæ strepitum, blandâ prece victus amici
Exilii duros lenibat voce labores.
Tum neque ripa suo, barathro nec fixa sub imo
Saxa stetere loco, nutat Trachinia rupes,
Nec sentit solitas, immania pondera, silvas,
Emotæque suis properant de collibus orni,
Mulcenturque novo maculosi carmine lynces.
Diis dilecte senex, te Jupiter æquus oportet
Nascentem, et miti lustrarit lumine Phœbus,
Atlantisque nepos; neque enim nisi charus ab ortu
Diis superis poterit magno favisse poetæ
Hinc longæva tibi lento sub flore senectus
Vernat, et Æsonios lucratur vivida fusos,
Nondum deciduos servans tibi frontis honores,
Ingeniumque vigens et adultum mentis acumen.
O mihi si mea sors talem concedat amicum,
Phœbæos decorasse viros qui tam bene nôrit,
Si quando indigenas revocabo in carmina reges,
Arturumque etiam sub terris bella moventem,
Aut dicam invictæ sociali fœdere mensæ
Magnanimos heroas, et (O modo spiritus adsit!)
Frangam Saxonicas Britonum sub Marte phalanges.
Tandem ubi non tacitæ permensus tempora vitæ,
Annorumque satur cineri sua jura relinquam,
Ille mihi lecto madidis astaret ocellis,
Astanti sat erit si dicam sim tibi curæ,
Ille meos artus, liventi morte solutos,
Curaret parva componi molliter urna.
Forsitan et nostros ducat de marmore vultus,
Nectens aut Paphia myrti aut Parnasside lauri
Fronde comas, at ego secura pace quiescam.
Tum quoque, si qua fides, si præmia certa bonorum,
Ipse ego cœlicolûm semotus in æthera divûm,
Quò labor et mens pura vehunt, atque ignea virtus,
Secreti hæc aliqua mundi de parte videbo
(Quantum fata sinunt) : et tota mente serenum
Ridens purpureo suffundar lumine vultus,
Et simul æthereo plaudam mihi lætus Olympo.

EPITAPHIUM DAMONIS.

ARGUMENTUM.

Thyrsis et Damon ejusdem viciniæ pastores, eadem studia sequuti à pueritiâ amici erant, ut qui plurimum. Thyrsis animi causâ profectus peregrè de obitu Damonis nuncium accepit. Domum postea reversus, et rem ita esse comperto,[1] se suamque solitudinem hôc carmine deplorat. Damonis autem sub personâ hic intelligitur CAROLUS DEODATUS ex urbe Hetruriæ Luca paterno genere oriundus, cætera Anglus; ingenio, doctrinâ, clarissimisque cæteris virtutibus, dum viveret, juvenis egregius.

HIMERIDES nymphæ (nam vos et Daphnin et Hylan,
Et plorata diu meministis fata Bionis)
Dicite Sicelicum Thamesina per oppida carmen:
Quas miser effudit voces, quæ murmura Thyrsis,
Et quibus assiduis exercuit antra querelis,
Fluminaque, fontesque vagos, nemorumque recessus,
Dum sibi præreptum queritur Damona, neque altam
Luctibus exemit noctem loca sola pererrans.
Et jam bis viridi surgebat culmus arista,
Et totidem flavas numerabant horrea messes,
Ex quo summa dies tulerat Damona sub umbras,
Nec dum aderat Thyrsis; pastorem scilicet illum
Dulcis amor Musæ Thusca retinebat in urbe.
Ast ubi mens expleta domum, pecorisque relicti
Cura vocat, simul assuetâ seditque sub ulmo,
Tum verò amissum tum denique sentit amicum
Cœpit et immensum sic exonerare dolorem.
Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Hei mihi! quæ terris, quæ dicam numina cœlo,
Postquam te summiti rapuerunt funere, Damon!
Siccine nos linquis, tua sic sine nomine virtus
Ibit, et obscuris numero sociabitur umbris?
At non ille, animas virgâ qui dividit aureâ,
Ista velit, dignumque tui te ducat in agmen,
Ignavumque procul pœnus arceat omne silentum.
Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Quicquid erit, certè, nisi me lupus antè videbit,
Indeplorato non comminuere sepulchro,
Constabitque tuus tibi honos, longumque vigebit
Inter pastores: illi tibi vota secundo
Solvere post Daphnin, post Daphnin dicere laudes

[1] Comperiens edit. Fenton.

Gaudebunt, dum rura Pales, dum Faunus amabit,
Si quid id est, priscamque fidem coluisse, piumque,
Palladiasque artes, sociumque habuisse canorum.
Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Hæc tibi certa manent, tibi erunt hæc præmia, Damon,
At mihi quid tandem fiet modo? quis mihi fidus
Hærebit lateri comes, ut tu sæpe solebas
Frigoribus duris, et per loca fœta pruinis,
Aut rapido sub sole, siti morientibus herbis;
Sive opus in magnos fuit eminùs ire leones,
Aut avidos terrere lupos præsepibus altis,
Quis fando sopire diem, cantuque solebit?
Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Pectora cui credam? quis me lenire docebit
Mordaces curas, quis longam fallere noctem
Dulcibus alloquiis, grato cum sibilat igni
Molle pyrum, et nucibus strepitat focus, et malus auster
Miscet cuncta foris, et desuper intonat ulmo?
Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Aut æstate, dies medio dum vertitur axe,
Cum Pan æsculeâ somnum capit abditus umbrâ,
Et repetunt sub aquis sibi nota sedilia nymphæ,
Pastoresque latent, stertit sub sepe colonus,
Quis mihi blanditiasque tuas, quis tum mihi risus,
Cecropiosque sales referet, cultosque lepores?
Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
At jam solus agros, jam pascua solas oberro,
Sicubi ramosæ densantur vallibus umbræ,
Hic serum expecto, supra caput imber et Eurus
Triste sonant, fractæque agitata crepuscula sylvæ.
Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Heu, quam culta mihi prius arva procacibus herbis
Involvuntur, et ipsa situ seges alta fatiscit!
Innuba neglecto marcescit et uva racemo,
Nec myrteta juvant; ovium quoque tædet, at illæ
Mœrent, inque suum convertunt ora magistrum.
Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Tityrus ad corylos vocat, Alphesibœus ad ornos,
Ad salices Ægon, ad flumina pulcher Amyntas,
"Hic gelidi fontes, hic illita gramina musco,
Hic Zephyri, hic placidas interstrepit arbutus undas;"
Ista canunt surdo, frutices ego nactus abibam.
Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni
Mopsus ad hæc, nam me redeuntem forte notarat

(Et callebat avium linguas, et sidera Mopsus),
"Thyrsi quid hoc?" dixit, "quæ te coquit improbabilis?
Aut te perdit amor, aut te male fascinat astrum,
Saturni grave sæpe fuit pastoribus astrum,
Intimaque obliquo figit præcordia plumbo."
Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Mirantur nymphæ, et "quid te, Thyrsi, futurum est?
Quid tibi vis?" aiunt, "non hæc solet esse juventæ,
Nubila frons, oculique truces, vultusque severi,
Illa choros, lususque leves, et semper amorem
Jure petit, bis ille miser qui serus amavit."
Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Venit Hyas, Dryopeque, et filia Baucidis Ægle,
Docta modos, citharæque sciens, sed perdita fastu,
Venit Idumanii Chloris vicina fluenti;
Nil me blanditiæ, nil me solantia verba,
Nil me, si quid adest, movet, aut spes ulla futuri.
Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni
Hei mihi, quam similes ludunt per prata juvenci,
Omnes unanimi secum sibi lege sodales!
Nec magis hunc alio quisquam secernit amicum
De grege, sic densi veniunt ad pabula thoes,
Inque vicem hirsuti paribus junguntur onagri;
Lex eadem pelagi, deserto in littore Proteus
Agmina phocarum numerat, vilisque volucrum
Passer habet semper quicum sit, et omnia circum
Farra libens volitet, sero sua tecta revisens,
Quem si sors letho objecit, seu milvus adunco
Fata tulit rostro, seu stravit arundine fossor,
Protinus ille alium socio petit inde volatu
Nos durum genus, et diris exercita fatis
Gens homines aliena animis, et pectore discors,
Vix sibi quisque parem de millibus invenit unum.
Aut si sors dederit tandem non aspera votis,
Illum inopina dies, qua non speraveris hora,
Surripit, æternum linquens in sæcula damnum.
Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Heu quis me ignotas traxit vagus error in oras
Ire per aëreas rupes, Alpemque nivosam!
Ecquid erat tanti Romam vidisse sepultam
(Quamvis illa foret, qualem dum viseret olim,
Tityrus ipse suas et oves et rura reliquit);
Ut te tam dulci possem caruisse sodale,
Possem tot maria alta, tot interponere montes,

Tot sylvas, tot saxa tibi, fluviosque sonantes!
Ah certè extremùm licuisset tangere dextram,
Et bene compositos placidè morientis ocellos,
Et dixisse, "Vale, nostri memor ibis ad astra."
Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Quamquam etiam vestri nunquam meminisse pigebit,
Pastores Thusci, Musis operata juventus,
Hic Charis, atque Lepos; et Thuscus tu quoque, Damon
Antiquâ genus unde petis Lucumonis ab urbe.
O ego quantus eram, gelidi cum stratus ad Arni
Murmura, populeumque nemus, quà mollior herba,
Carpere nunc violas, nunc summas carpere myrtos,
Et potui Lycidæ certantem audire Menalcam!
Ipse etiam tentare ausus sum, nec puto multùm
Displicui, nam sunt et apud me munera vestra
Fiscellæ, calathique, et cerea vincla cicutæ:
Quin et nostra suas docuerunt nomina fagos
Et Datis, et Francinus, erant et vocibus ambo
Et studiis noti, Lydorum sanguinis ambo.
Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Hæc mihi tum læto dictabat roscida luna,
Dum solus teneros claudebam cratibus hædos.
Ah quoties dixi, cùm te cinis ater habebat,
Nunc canit, aut lepori nunc tendit retia Damon,
Vimina nunc texit, varios sibi quod sit in usus!
Et quæ tum facili sperabam mente futura
Arripui voto levis, et præsentia finxi:
"Heus bone numquid agis? nisi te quid forte retardat,
Imus? et argutâ paulùm recubamus in umbrâ,
Aut ad aquas Colni, aut ubi jugera Cassibelauni?
Tu mihi percurres medicos, tua gramina, succos,
Helleborúmque, humilésque, crocos, foliúmque, hyacinthi,
Quasque habet ista palus herbas, artesque medentùm."
Ah pereant herbæ, pereant artesque medentùm,
Gramina, postquam ipsi nil profecere magistro.
Ipse etiam, nam nescio quid mihi grande sonabat
Fistula, ab undecimâ jam lux est altera nocte,
Et tum forte novis admôram labra cicutis,
Dissiluere tamen ruptâ compage, nec ultra
Ferre graves potuere sonos; dubito quoque ne sim
Turgidulus, tamen et referam; vos cedite, sylvæ.
Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Ipse ego Dardanias Rutupina per æquora puppes
Dicam, et Paxarasidos regnum vetus Inogeniæ,

Brenpúmque Aevigarúmque ducés, priscúmque Belimum,
Et tandem Armoricos Britonum sub lege colonos;
Tum gravidam Arturo fatali fraude Iögernen,
Mendaces vultus, assumptaque Gorloïs arma,
Merlini dolus. O mihi tum si vita supersit,
Tu procul annosa pendebis fistula pinu
Multúm oblita mihi, aut patriis mutata Camœnis
Brittonicum strides, quid enim? omnia non licet uni;
Non sperâsse uni licet omnia; mi satis ampla,
Merces, et mihi grande decus (sim ignotus in ævum
Tum licet, externo penitusque inglorius orbi)
Si me flava comas legat Usa, et potor Alauni,
Vorticibusque frequens Abra, et nemus omne Treantæ,
Et Thamesis meus ante omnes, et fusca metallis
Tamara, et extremis me discant Orcades undis.
Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Hæc tibi servabam lentâ sub cortice lauri,
Hæc, et plura simul, tum quæ mihi pocula Mansus,
Mansus Chalcidicæ non ultima gloria ripæ,
Bina dedit, mirum artis opus, mirandus et ipse,
Et circum gemino cælaverat argumento:
In medio rubri maris unda, et odoriferum ver,
Littora longa Arabum, et sudantes balsama sylvæ,
Has inter Phœnix divina avis, unica terris,
Cæruleùm fulgens diversicoloribus alis
Auroram vitreis surgentem respicit undis.
Parte alia polus omnipatens, et magnus Olympus,
Quis putet? hic quoque Amor, pictæque in nube pharetræ
Arma corusca faces, et spicula tincta pyropo;
Nec tenues animas, pectúsque ignobile vulgi
Hinc ferit, at circùm flammantia lumina torquens
Semper in erectum spargit sua tela per orbes
Impiger, et pronos nunquam collimat ad ictus,
Hinc mentes ardere sacræ, formæque deorum.
Tu quoque in his, nec me fallit spec lubrica, Damon,
Tu quoque in his certè es, nam quò tua dulcis abiret
Sanctáque simplicitas, nam quò tua candida virtus?
Nec te Lethæo fas quæsivisse sub orco,
Nec tibi conveniunt lacrymæ, nec flebimus ultrà,
Ite procul lacrymæ, purum colit æthera Damon,
Æthera purus habet, pluvium pede reppulit arcum·
Heroúmque animas inter, divósque perennes,
Æthereos haurit latices, et gaudia potat
Ore sacro Quin tu cœli post jura recepta

Dexter ades, placidúsque fave quicunque vocaris,
Seu tu noster eris Damon, sive æquior audis
Diodotus, quo te divino nomine cuncti
Cœlicolæ nôrint, sylvisque vocabere Damon.
Quòd tibi purpureus pudor, et sine labe juventus
Grata fuit, quòd nulla tori libata voluptas,
En etiam tibi virginei servantur honores;
Ipse caput nitidum cinctus rutilante corona,
Lætáque frondentis gestans umbracula palmæ
Æternum perages immortales hymenæos;
Cantus ubi, choreisque furit lyra mista beatis,
Festa Sionæo bacchantur et Orgia thyrso.

JANUARY 23, 1646.

AD JOANNEM ROUSIUM OXONIENSIS ACADEMIÆ BIBLIOTHECARIUM.

De libro Poematum amisso, quem ille sibi denuo mitti postulabat, ut cum aliis nostris in Bibliotheca publica reponeret, ode.

STROPHE I.

GEMELLE cultu simplici gaudens liber,
Fronde licet geminâ,
Munditiéque nitens non operosâ,
Quam manus attulit
Juvenilis olim,
Sedula tamen haud nimii poetæ;
Dum vagus Ausonias nunc per umbras,
Nunc Britannica per vireta lusit
Insons populi, barbitóque devius
Indulsit patrio, mox itidem pectine Daunio
Longinquum intonuit melos
Vicinis, et humum vix tetigit pede,

ANTISTROPHE.

Quis te parve liber, quis te fratribus
Subduxit reliquis dolo?
Cum tu missus ab urbe,
Docto jugiter obsecrante amico
Illustre tendebas iter
Thamesis ad incunabula

Cæruleï patriæ,
Fontes ubi limpidi
Aonidum, thyasusque sacer
Orbi notus per immensos
Temporum lapsus redeunte cœlo,
Celeberque futurus in ævum?

STROPHE II.

Modò quis deus, aut editus deo
Pristinam gentis miseratus indolem
(Si satis noxas luimus priores,
Mollique luxu degener otium),
Tollat nefandos civium tumultus,
Almaque revocet studia sanctus,
Et relegatas sine sede Musas
Jam penè totis finibus Angligenûm,
Immundasque volucres
Unguibus imminentes
Figat Apollineâ pharetra,
Phinéamque abigat pestem procul amne Pegaséo?

ANTISTROPHE.

Quin tu, libelle, nuntii licet malâ
Fide, vel oscitantiâ,
Semel erraveris agmine fratrum,
Seu quis te teneat specus,
Seu qua te latebra, forsan unde vili
Callo teréris institoris insulsi,
Lætare felix, en iterum tibi
Spes nova fulget posse profundam
Fugere Lethen, vehique superam
In Jovis aulam remige pennâ;

STROPHE III.

Nam te Roüsius sui
Optat peculi, numeróque justo
Sibi pollicitum queritur abesse,
Rogatque venias ille cujus inclyta
Sunt data virûm monumenta curæ:
Téque adytis etiam sacris
Voluit reponi, quibus et ipse præsidet
Æternorûm operum custos fidelis;
Quæstorque gazæ nobilioris,
Quàm cui præfuit Ion,

Clarus Erechtheides,
Opulenta dei per templa parentis,
Fulvosque tripodas, donaque Delphica,
Iön Actææ genitus Creusæ.

ANTISTROPHE.

Ergo tu visere lucos
Musarum ibis amœnos,
Diamque Phœbi rursus ibis in domum,
Oxoniâ quam valle colit,
Delo posthabitâ,
Bifidóque Parnassi jugo:
Ibis honestus,
Postquam egregiam tu quoque sortem
Nactus abis, dextri prece sollicitatus amici.
Illic legéris inter alta nomina
Authorum, Graiæ simul et Latinæ
Antiquæ gentis lumina, et verum decus

EPODOS.

Vos tandem haud vacui mei labores,
Quicquid hoc sterile fudit ingenium,
Jam serò placidam sperare jubeo
Perfunctam invidiâ requiem, sedesque beatas,
Quas bonus Hermes
Et tutela dabit solers Roüsi,
Quo neque lingua procax vulgi penetrabit, atque longe
Turba legentum prava facesset;
At ultimi nepotes,
Et cordatior ætas,
Judicia rebus æquiora forsitan
Adhibebit integro sinu.
Tum, livore sepulto
Si quid meremur sana posteritas sciet,
Roüsio favente.

Ode tribus constat Strophis, totidémque Antistrophis, unâ demum Epodo clausis, quas, tametsi omnes nec versuum numero, nec certis ubique colis exactè respondeant, ita tamen secuimus, commodè legendi potiùs, quàm ad antiquos concinendi modos, rationem spectantes. Alioquin hoc genus rectiùs fortasse dici monostrophicum debuerat. Metra partim sunt κατὰ σχέσιν, partim ἀπολελυμένα. Phaleucia quæ sunt, spondæum tertio loco bis admittunt, quod idem in secundo loco Catullus ad libitum fecit.

AD CHRISTINAM SUECORUM REGINAM NOMINE CROMWELLI.[1]

BELLIPOTENS virgo, septem regina trionum,
Christina, Arctoï lucida stella poli!
Cernis quas merui dura sub casside rugas,
Utque senex armis impiger ora tero;
Invia fatorum dum per vestigia nitor,
Exequor et populi fortia jussa manu.
Ast tibi submittit frontem reverentior umbra;
Nec sunt hi vultus regibus usque truces.

[1] These verses were sent to Christina Queen of Sweden, with Cromwell's picture, and are by some ascribed to Andrew Marvel, as by others to Milton; but I should rather think they were Milton's, being more within his province as Latin secretary.

THE END

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